

STARBLAZER

A dynamic comic book illustration of a space battle. A large, yellow and orange spaceship with a complex, angular design is the central focus, firing energy beams. Below it, a blue and white spaceship is being crushed by a massive, blue, crystalline structure. The background is a fiery red and orange space environment with a large green planet in the upper right.

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 71

16p

It was a killing machine that no-one could stop . . .

JAWS OF DEATH

STARBLAZER



DEEP IN EARTH
CONTROLLED SPACE
STOOD THE CONTROL WHEEL Z409
ON THE EDGE OF A STARGATE
WHERE VESSELS RE-ENTERED NORMAL
SPACE FROM THE DISTANT GALACTIC RIM. BUT
ALL WAS NOT RIGHT. A SERIES OF VESSELS HAD
SIMPLY DISAPPEARED FROM THE SCREENS OF Z409.
AS THE CREW PREPARED TO RECEIVE ANOTHER
VESSEL NOBODY HAD ANY IDEA THAT SOMEWHERE
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STARGATE LAY
THE MOST FEARFUL KILLING MACHINE IMAGINABLE.

JAWS OF

3

ON CONTROL WHEEL Z409 THE DUTY CONTROLLER WAS IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE FREIGHTER, SILVER LADY.

Z409 TO SILVER LADY. YOUR COURSE IS 7N240.1. SPEED IS WARP 3. SOLAR STORMS, FORCE 3 PREDICTED FOR SECTION X24.3.





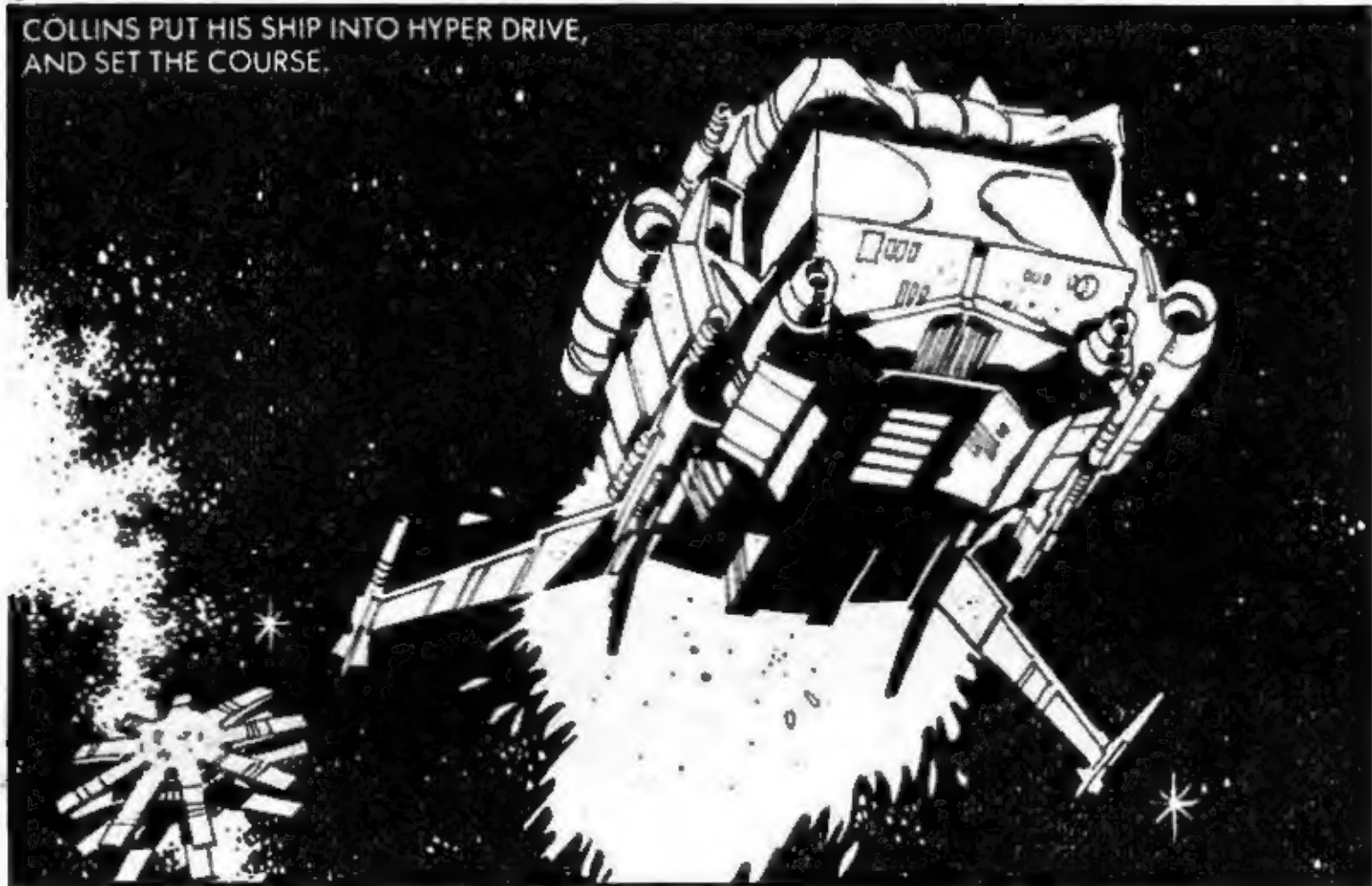
SOME HOURS LATER, CAPTAIN PHIL COLLINS WAS SUMMONED BY THE COMMANDER OF THE FEDERATION SPACE NAVY.



CAPTAIN PHIL COLLINS, OF THE SPECIAL SPACE EXECUTIVE, WAS A SOLITARY OPERATOR — A MAN TRAINED TO ACT ON HIS OWN.



COLLINS PUT HIS SHIP INTO HYPER DRIVE,
AND SET THE COURSE.



WHEN COLLINS REACHED THE SILVER
LADY'S LAST KNOWN POSITION —

I'M IN TROUBLE. NO
RESPONSE FROM THE SHIP'S CONTROLS.

ALL SYSTEMS MALFUNCTIONING ...
REPEAT ... ALL ...



ON BOARD Z409 —

COLLINS HAS DISAPPEARED
FROM THE SAME SECTOR, SIR.

EMERGENCY WARNING -- ALL
SHIPS TO AVOID THE FOLLOWING
TRIANGLE OF CO-ORDINATES ...



ALTHOUGH OFF THE SCREENS, COLLINS WAS STILL ALIVE.



THAT BRIGHT ASTEROID — IT SEEMS
TO BE PULLING ME TOWARDS IT.

THE SHIP'S GYROSTABILIZERS WENT HAYWIRE—

THERE'S NO WAY OF HOLDING THE SHIP —
I'LL COLLIDE WITH THAT ASTEROID.



SPACE SHIPS!
IT'S A SCRAPYARD.

TWO SECONDS TO IMPACT.



THE CRAFT BOUNCED UNCONTROLLABLY OVER THE WRECKAGE.

EMERGENCY! EMERGENCY! ASTEROID DEVOID OF
ATMOSPHERE. LIFE SUPPORT NECESSARY.



ONCE THE SHIP HAD SETTLED —

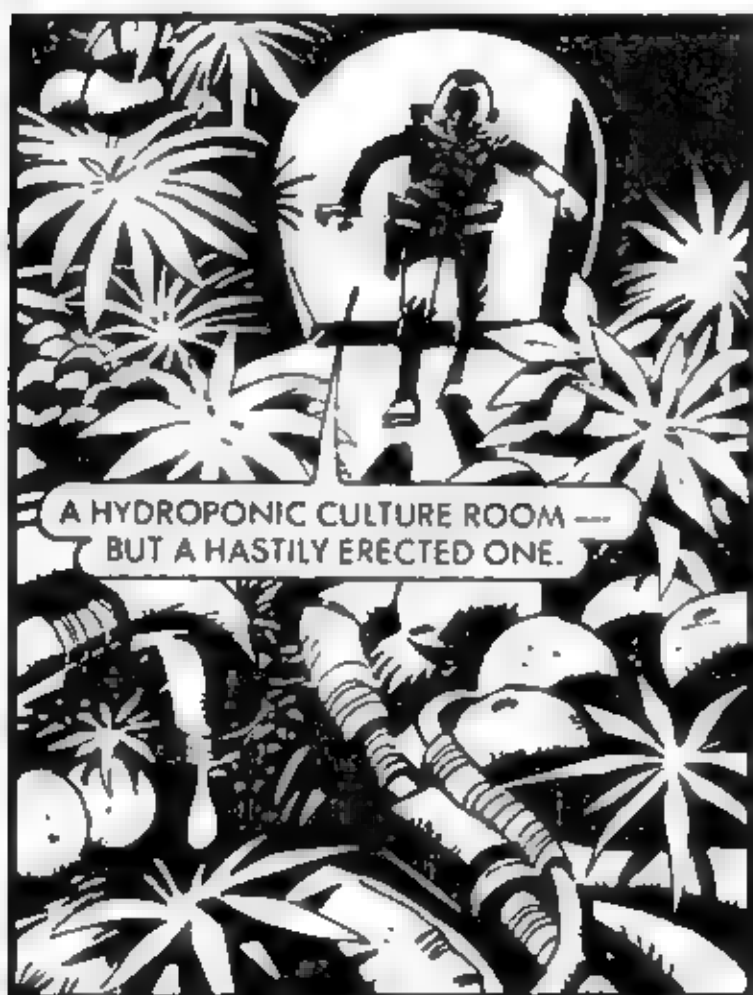
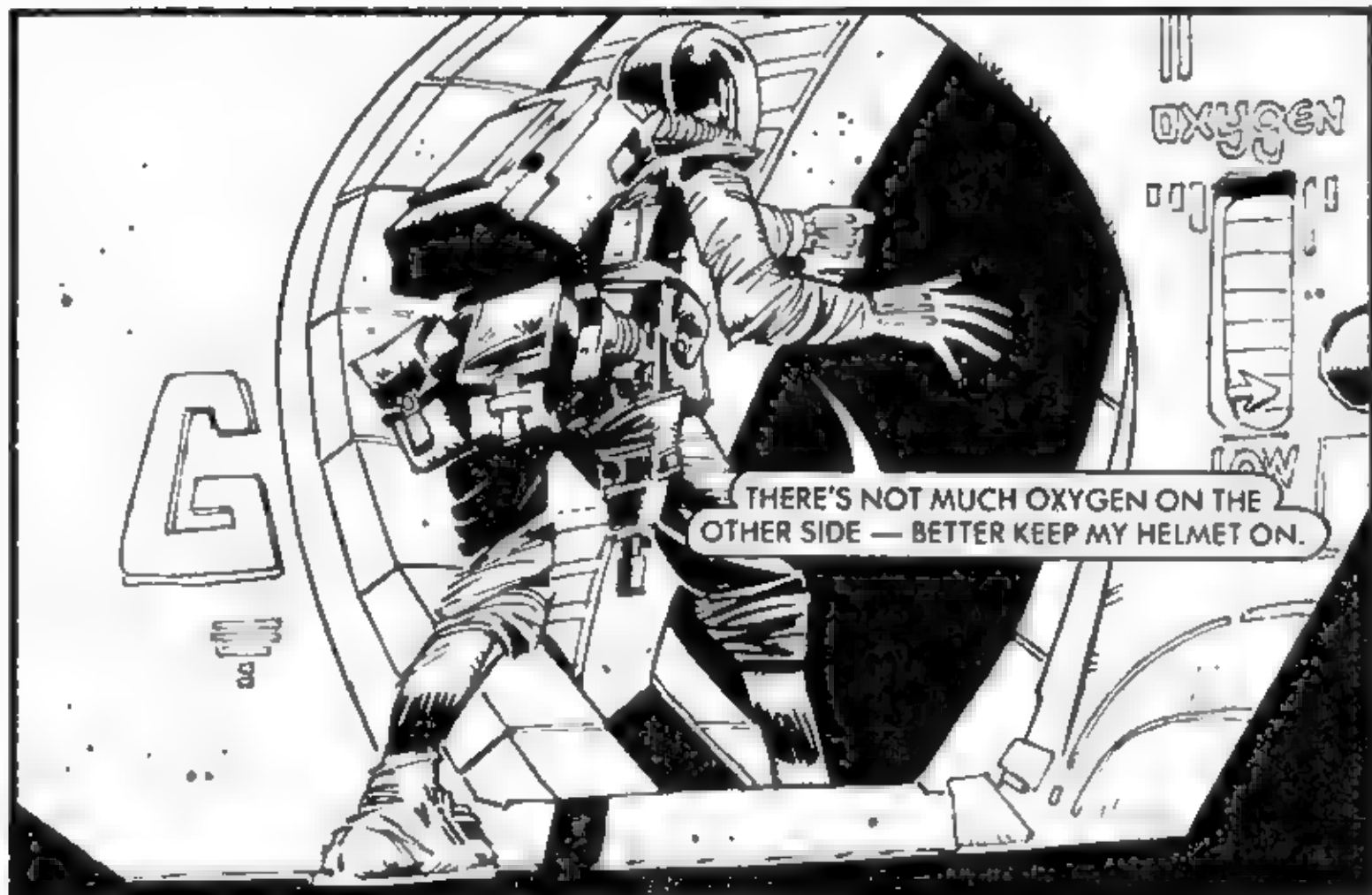


NOW TO INVESTIGATE.


COLLINS JETTED ACROSS TO THE NEAREST SPACESHIP.



THE POWER SOURCE MUST BE
AT THE CENTRE OF THE
ASTEROID BECAUSE THERE
WAS A STRONG MAGNETIC
FIELD ROUND THE ASTEROID.







KILL THE SCUM! IT ISN'T
TAKING US THIS TIME.



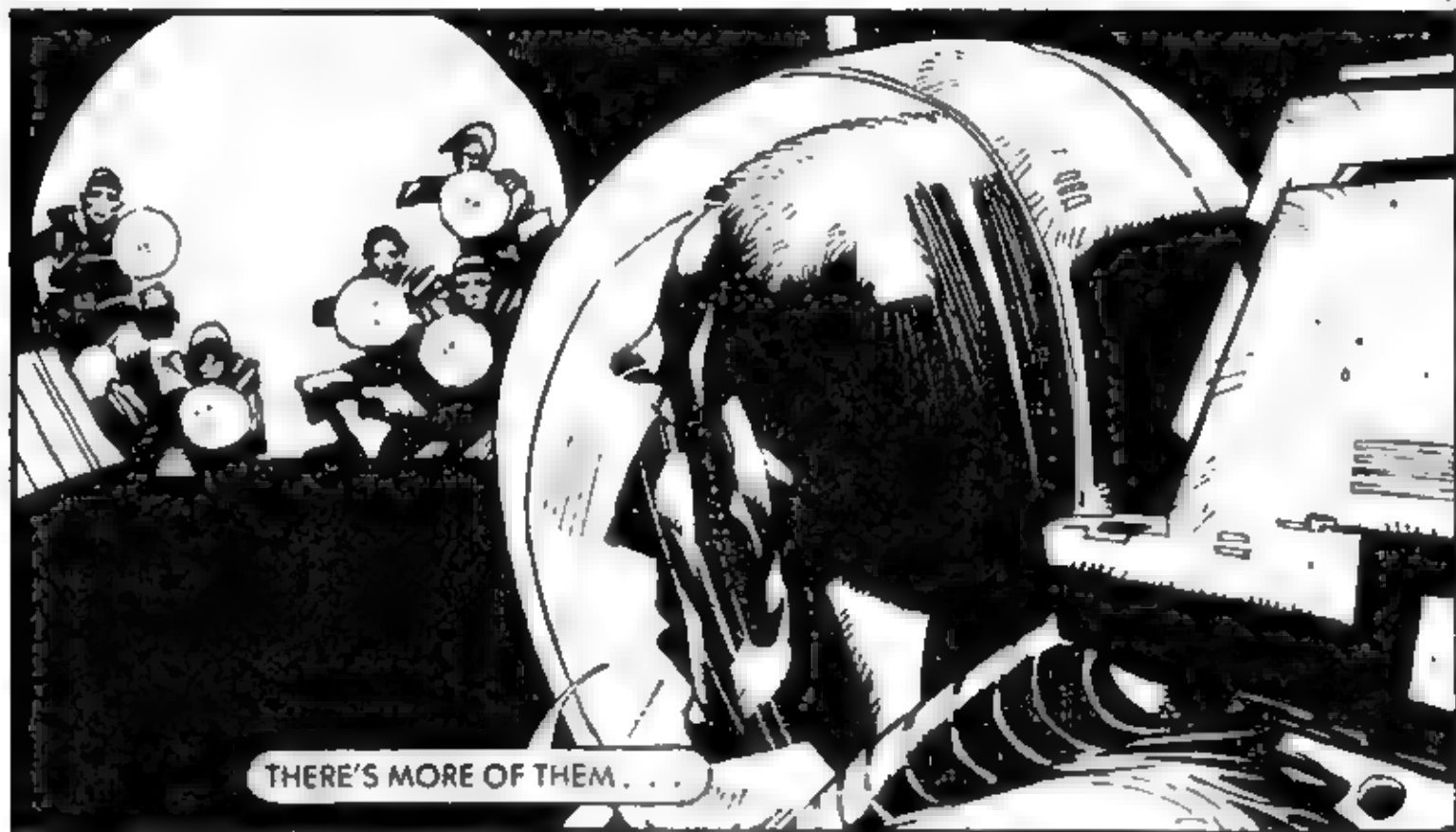
WHAT ARE THEY ON ABOUT?



THIS IS TOO MUCH ...
IT'S TIME FOR ACTION.



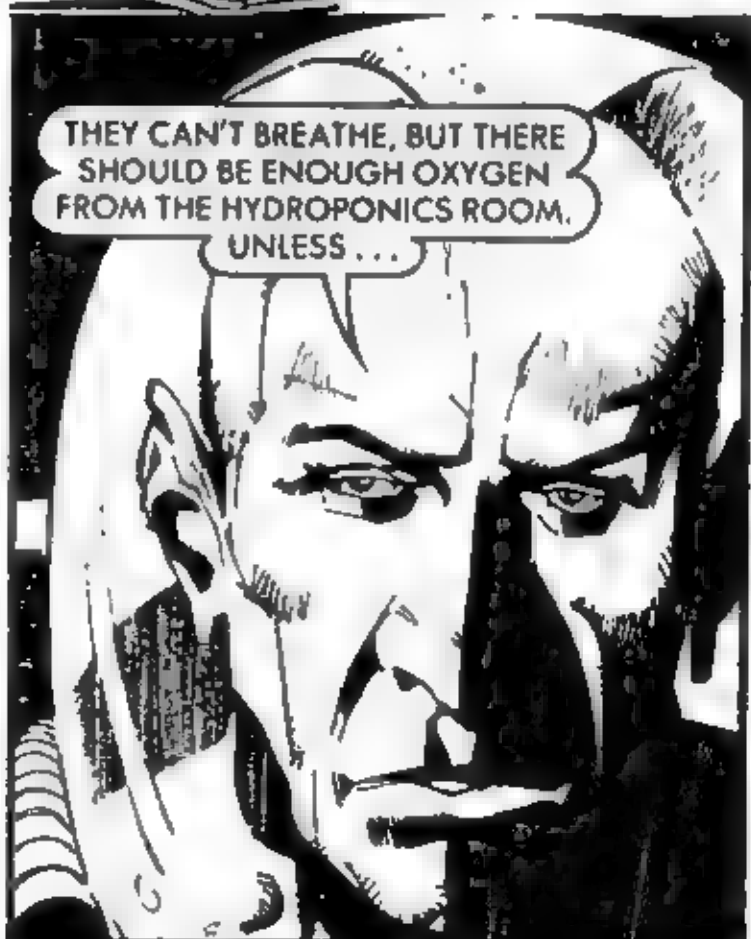




THE ATTACKERS BEGAN TO STAGGER AND THE FIRING CEASED.



CAN'T... CAN'T BREATHE.

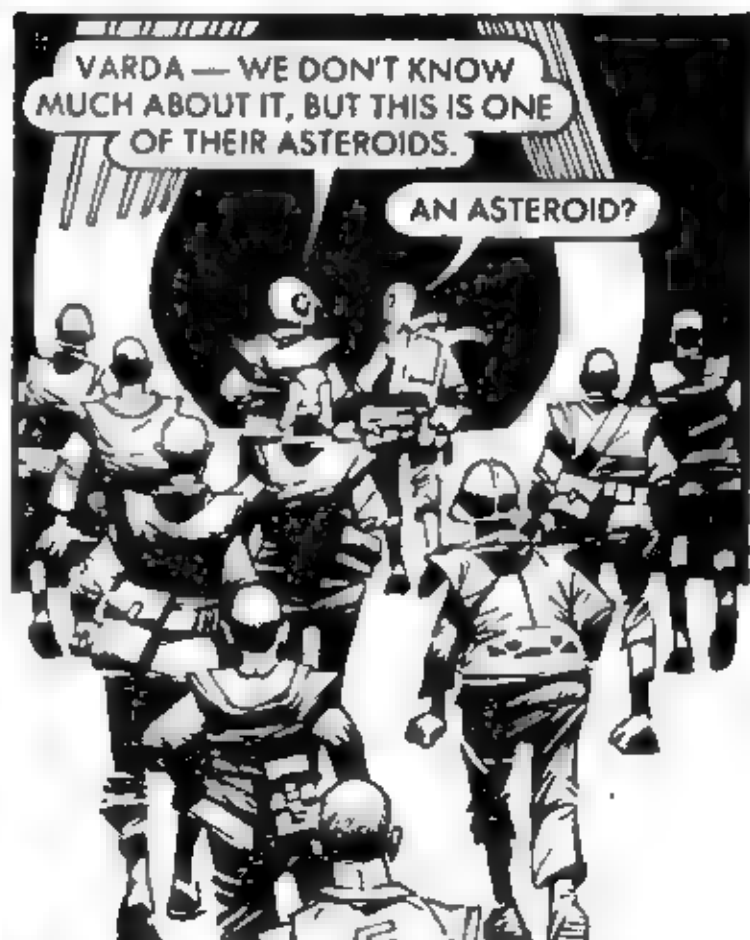



THEY CAN'T BREATHE, BUT THERE
SHOULD BE ENOUGH OXYGEN
FROM THE HYDROPONICS ROOM,
UNLESS...



AIR CAME FLOODING BACK ONCE
COLLINS HAD REPAIRED THE PIPE.







I'M LIEUTENANT JEFFERSON, BY THE WAY. THIS IS AN ASTEROID WITH SOME SORT OF FORCE FIELD WHICH ATTRACTS SPACECRAFT. EVERY SO OFTEN A "THING" COMES TO TAKE THE SPACECRAFT AWAY ...



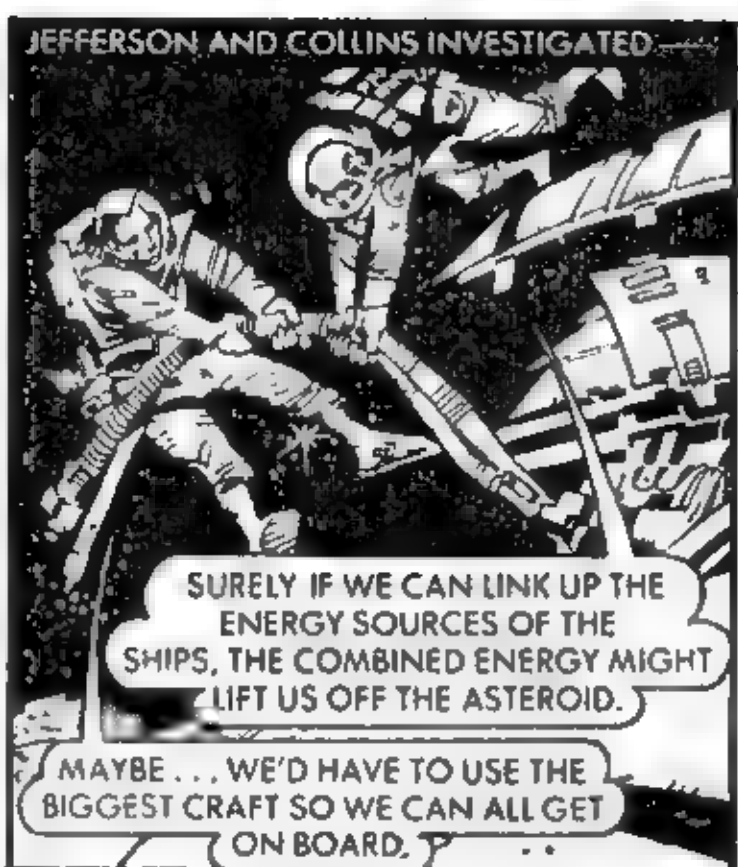
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

LOOK OUT THERE! A COLLECTION POINT, A SPACESHIP, WHICH WE'VE NICKNAMED "NIBBLER" COMES EVERY SO OFTEN AND INGESTS ALL THE SHIPS. THE LAST TIME IT TOOK ALL THE CREWS FIRST. WE MANAGED TO HIDE ON THE ASTEROID ITSELF.



NOTHING CAN GET AWAY FROM THE ASTEROID, NOT EVEN A MAYDAY SIGNAL.

YET THIS NIBBLER CAN GET AWAY. IT MUST BE A QUESTION OF POWER. I WANT A LOOK OUTSIDE.

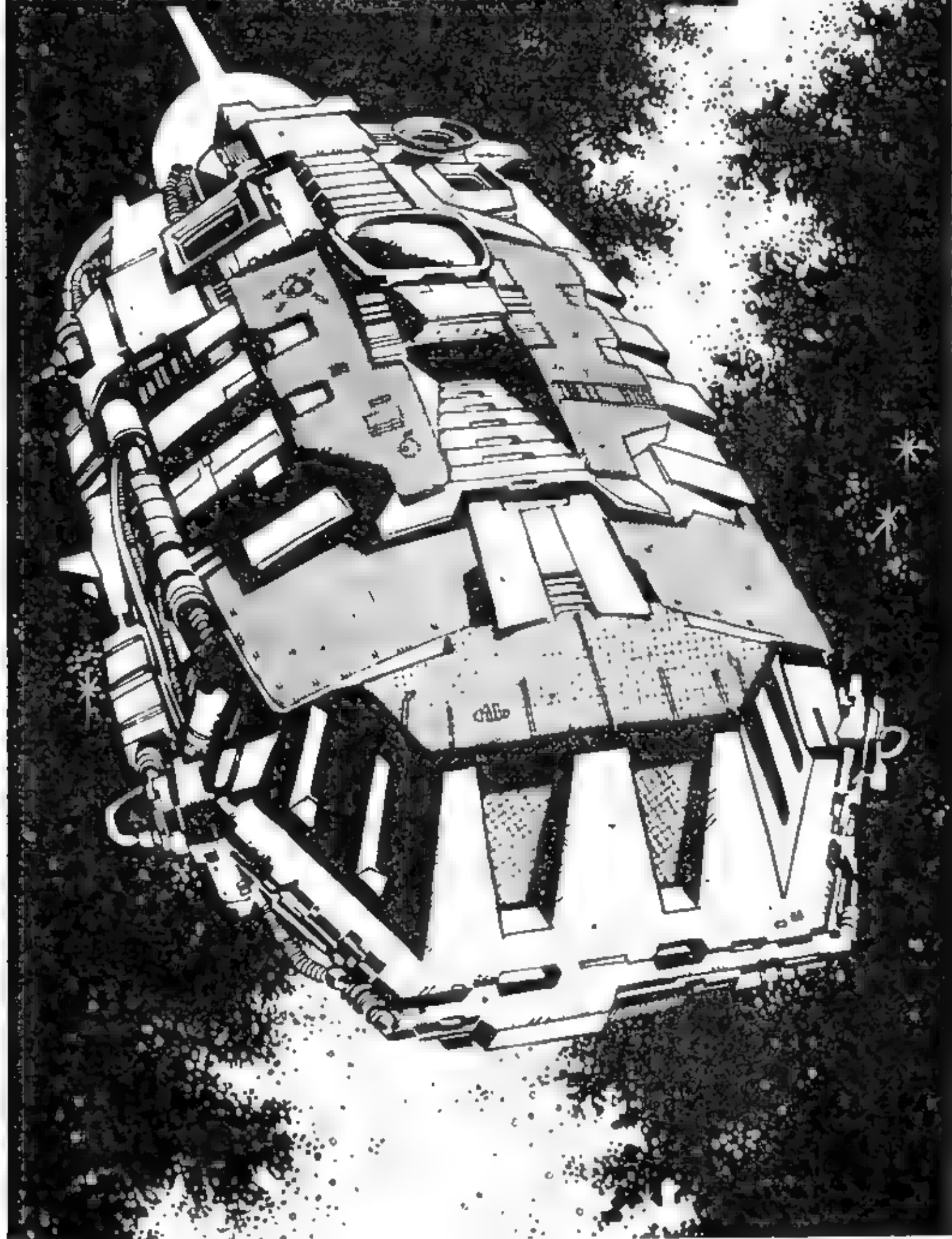


JEFFERSON AND COLLINS INVESTIGATED

SURELY IF WE CAN LINK UP THE ENERGY SOURCES OF THE SHIPS, THE COMBINED ENERGY MIGHT LIFT US OFF THE ASTEROID.

MAYBE . . . WE'D HAVE TO USE THE BIGGEST CRAFT SO WE CAN ALL GET ON BOARD.

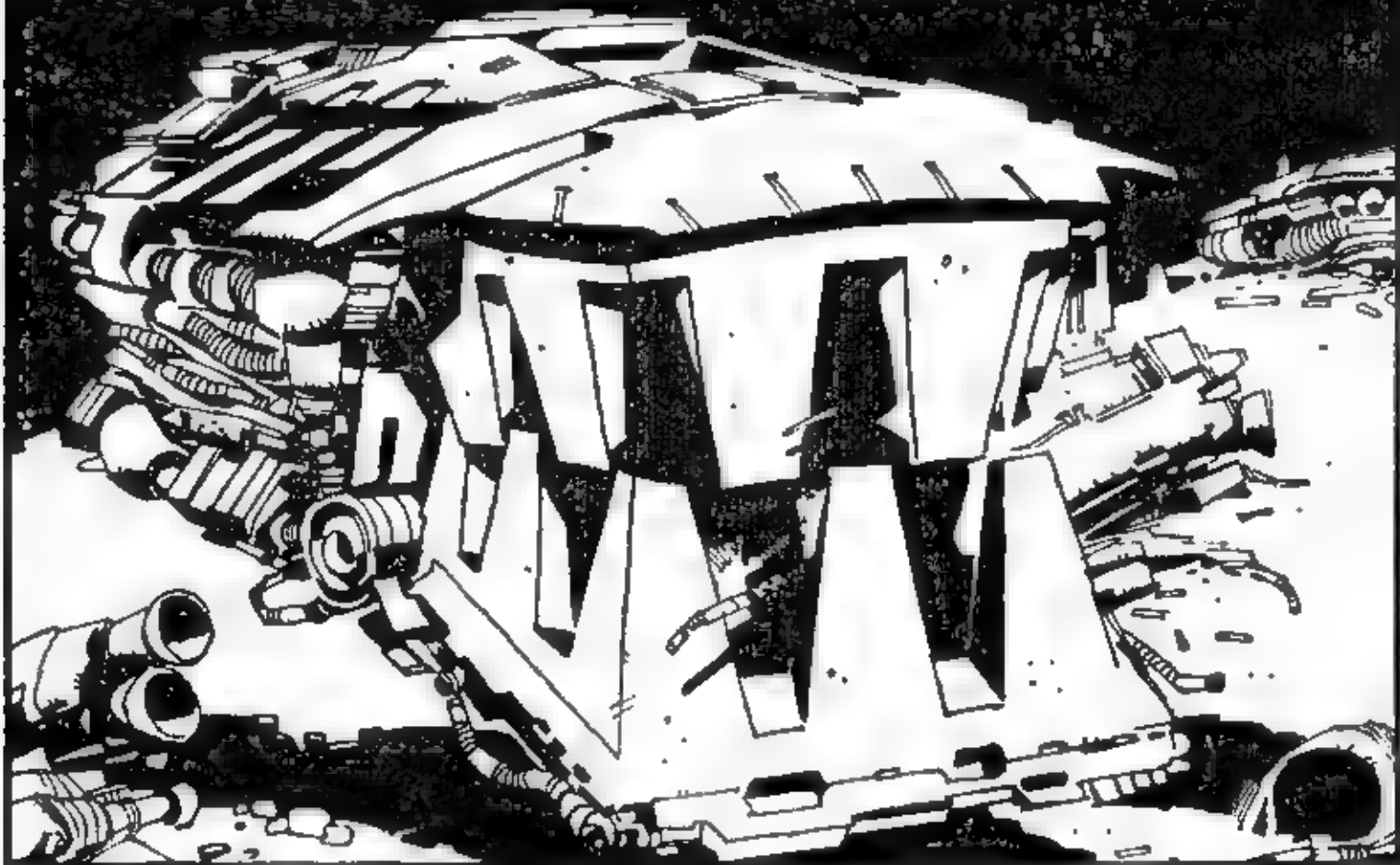
BUT NEARBY, THE "NIMBLER" WAS ALREADY CLOSING IN ON THE ASTEROID.



FIGHTING AGAINST TIME, THE CREW MEMBERS LINKED UP THE POWER SOURCES TO ONE OF THE BIGGEST FREIGHTERS.

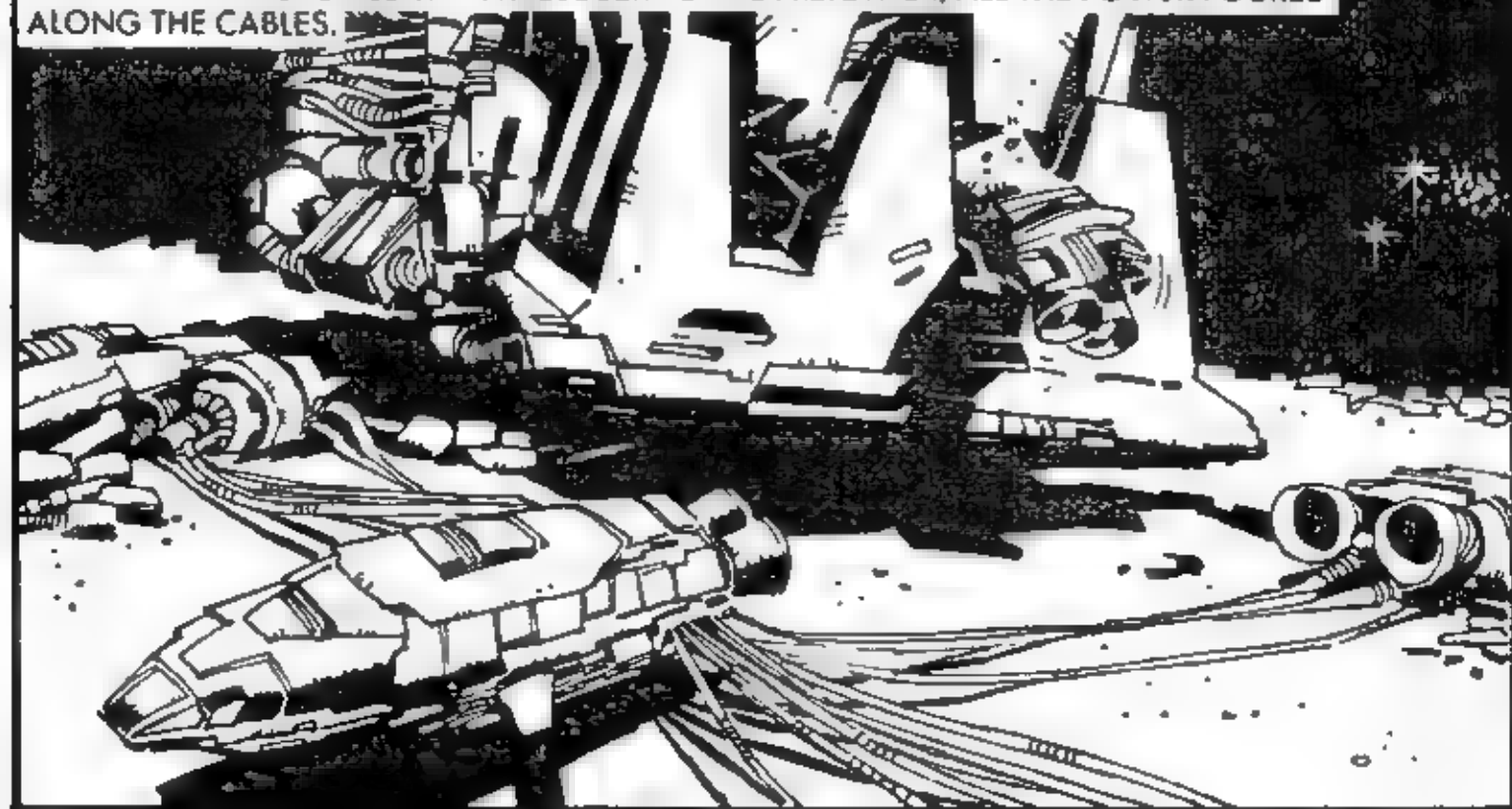


AS THE CREW SCRAMBLED ABOARD THE FREIGHTER, THE "NIBBLER" STARTED ITS WORK.





AS THE NIBBLER CHEWED IT WAY CLOSER TO THE FREIGHTER, ALL THE POWER POURED
ALONG THE CABLES.





THE GIANT FREIGHTER PULLED FREE FROM THE ASTEROID AS THE
VARDA KILLERS TRIED TO SEVER THE CABLES

WE'RE FREE!



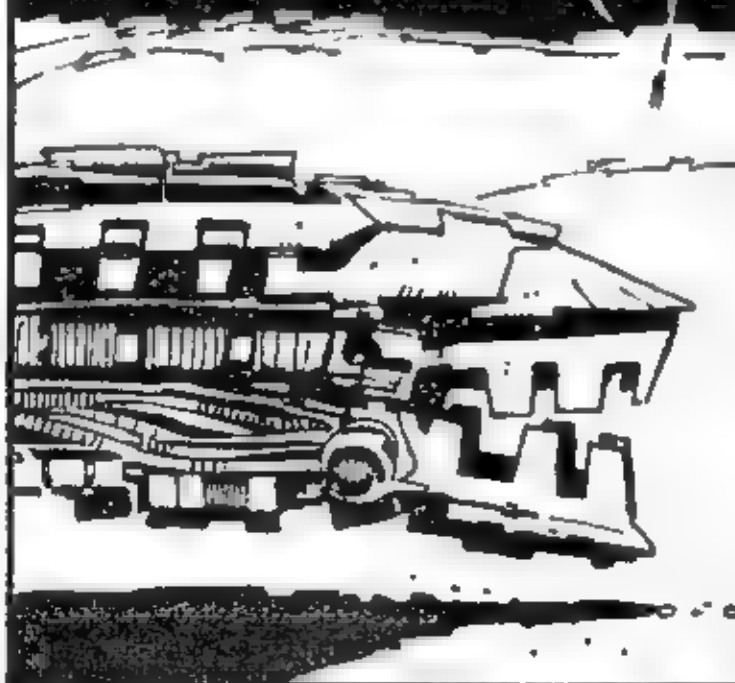
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I'M GOING OUT TO LOOK AT THE NIBBLER. THERE'S NO ONE ON IT AT THE MOMENT.

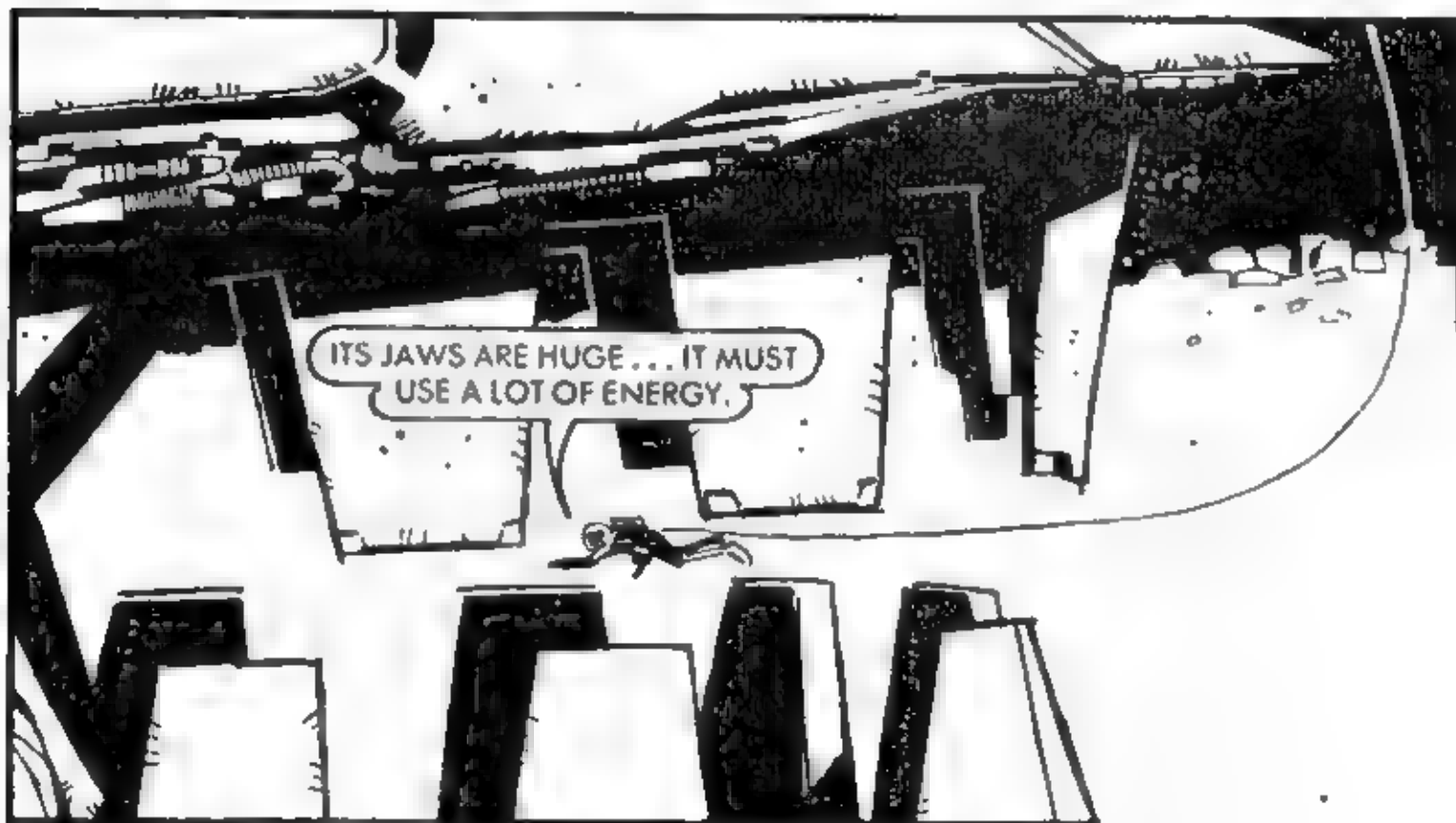


COLLINS JETTED DOWN TO THE NIBBLER

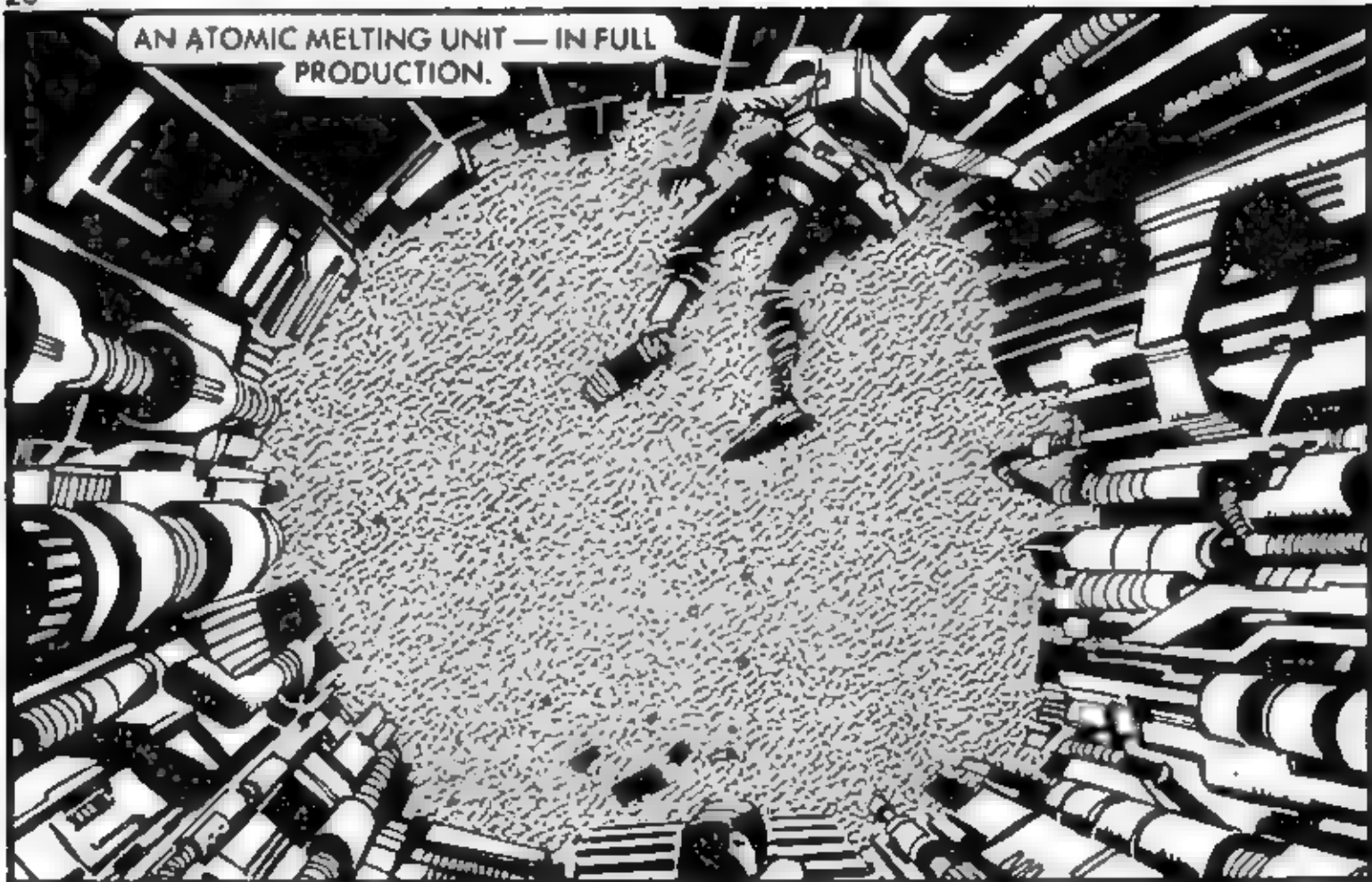
I MUST FIND OUT WHERE THIS CRAFT COMES FROM.



ITS JAWS ARE HUGE... IT MUST USE A LOT OF ENERGY.



AN ATOMIC MELTING UNIT — IN FULL
PRODUCTION.



A SHUDDER RAN THROUGH THE SHIP.

THE JAWS ARE CLOSING.

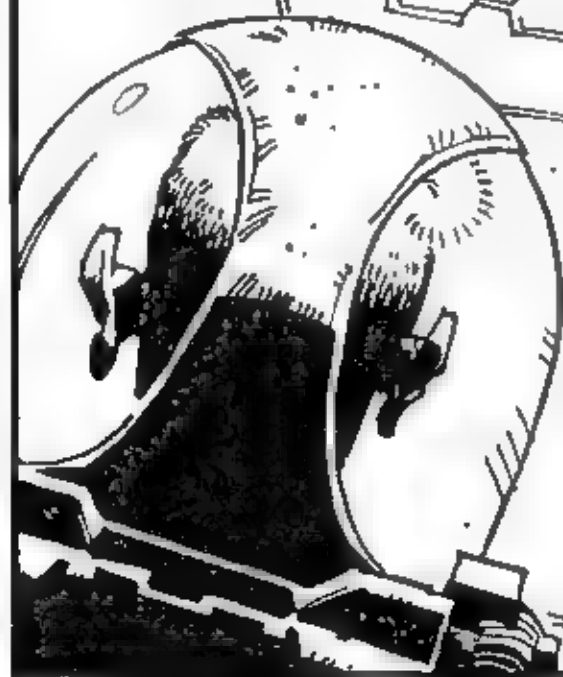


COLLINS JETTED UP TO THE CONTROL ROOM,
HIGH UP ABOVE THE JAWS.

THERE MUST BE
ANOTHER WAY IN.



THE TAIL... AND I KNOW A WAY
TO SLOW THIS THING DOWN



THAT'S THE FURNACE SHUT
OFF! RAPID COOLING SHOULD
CAUSE THE FURNACE WALL TO
CRACK — THEN SOMETHING
WILL HAPPEN



THE SUPERHEATED ALLOY FURNACE WALL CRACKED AS THE CONSTITUENT METALS CONTRACTED AT DIFFERING TEMPERATURES.



THE VARDA WILL BE TOO CONCERNED TO NOTICE ME, AND I'LL GET OUT.

ALARMS SHRILLED AND THE VARDA RETURNED TO THE NIBBLER.

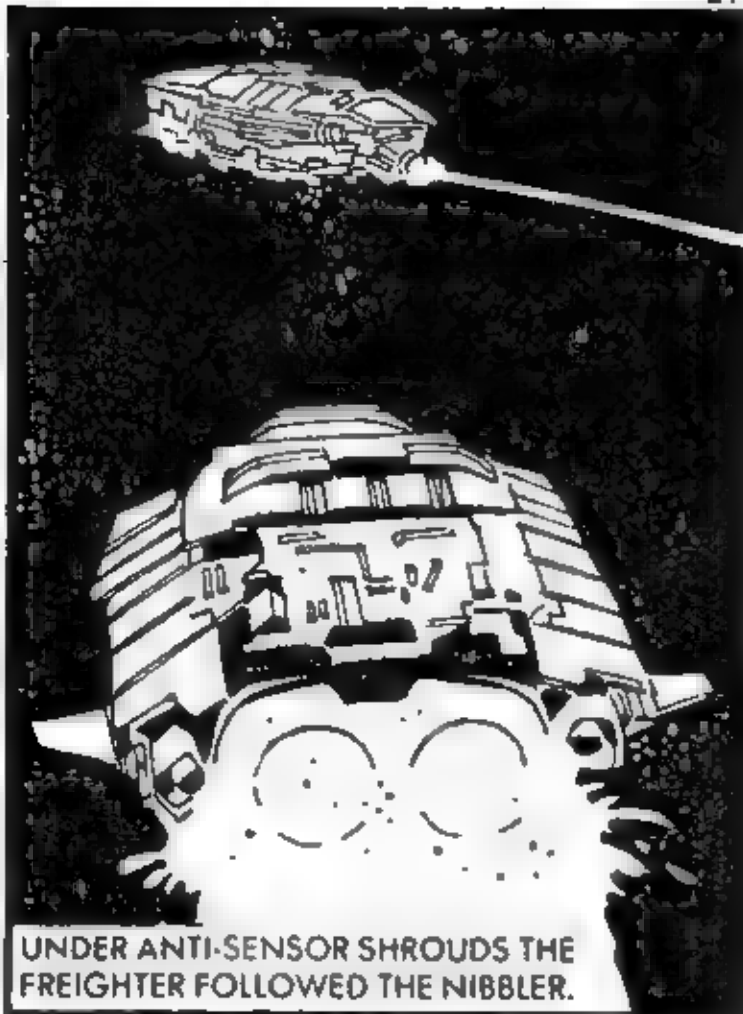
MALFUNCTION—
RETURN TO THE
HOMEBASE.



IN THE CONFUSION,
COLLINS SLIPPED
AWAY—



WE'LL FOLLOW THE NIBBLER. IT'S BADLY
DAMAGED SO IT WILL HAVE TO RETURN
TO BASE.



UNDER ANTI-SENSOR SHROUDS THE
FREIGHTER FOLLOWED THE NIBBLER.

MANY SPACIALS LATER —



COMP — GIVE A RUN-
DOWN ON PLANET.

PLANET ALLERUS. ATMOSPHERE 80%
OF EARTH'S . . . NOTHING ELSE KNOWN.



MALFUNCTION! WE MUST HAVE DAMAGED
THE ION CONDENSER TUBES WHEN WE
PULLED OFF THE ASTEROID — WE'VE NO
ATTITUDE CORRECTORS.



WE'RE GOING TO CRASH.



COLLINS MANAGED TO KEEP THE CRAFT ON AN EVEN KEEL



FAR OFF, TWO VARDA WATCHED —

ALIEN CRAFT IN SECTOR
2-ZERO — INVESTIGATE.



MIRACULOUSLY, NOBODY HAD BEEN KILLED IN THE CRASH.

I'LL TAKE THESE MEN AND
HAVE A LOOK ROUND.

KEEP IN TOUCH OVER THE
INTERCOM — WE'LL BE ON STANDBY.



BUT THEY HAD NOT GONE FAR INTO THE JUNGLE, WHEN —

WHAT THE ... ?
VARDA KILLERS!



THE FLEET LEADER
EAGERLY AWAITS YOU.

FLEET LEADER? THEY MUST BE BUILDING AN
ATTACK FORCE — WHY?









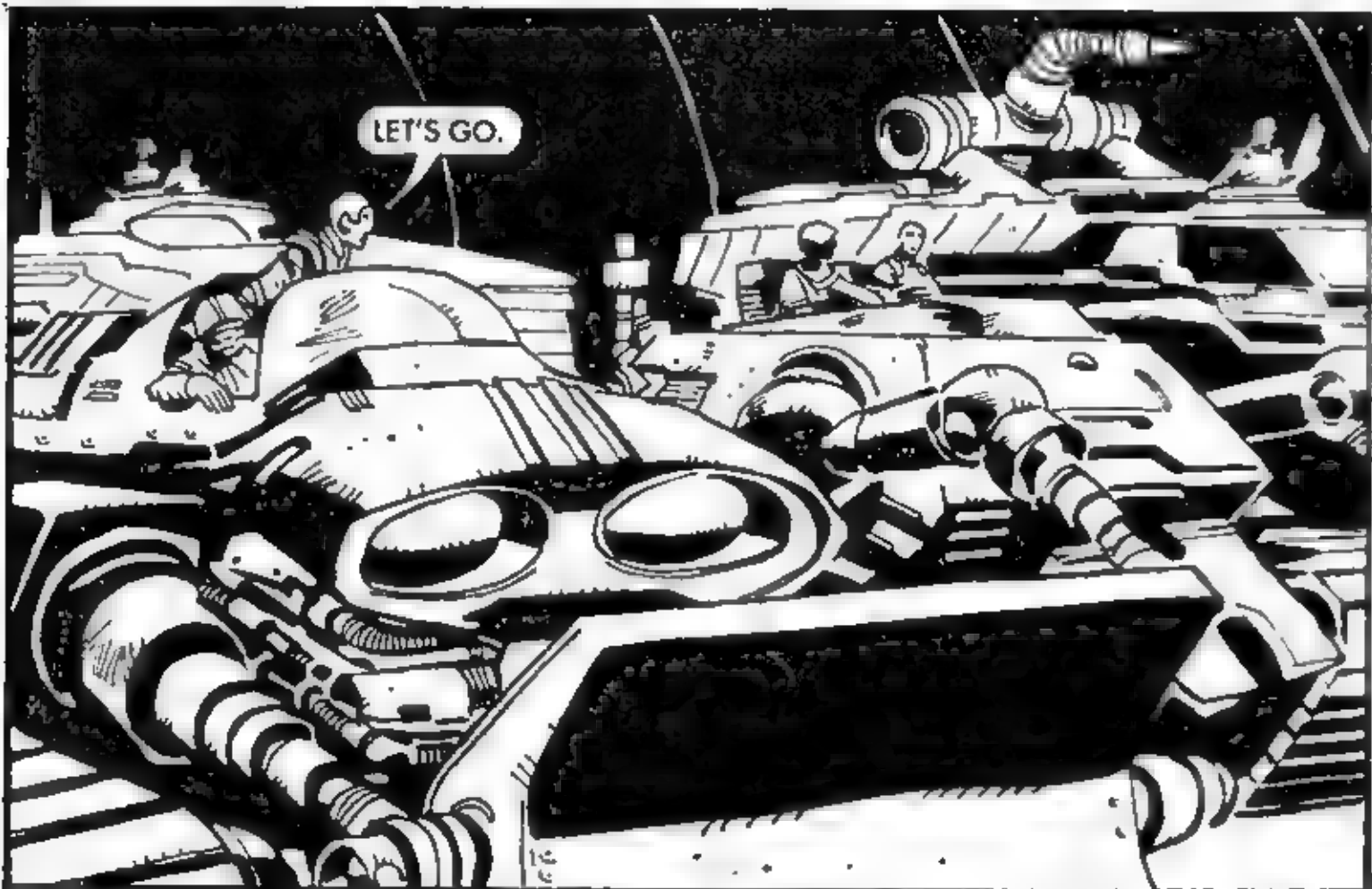


WITH COLLINS' CAPTURE, JEFFERSON MADE PLANS.

THIS FREIGHTER HAS A LOAD OF AGRICULTURAL VEHICLES ON BOARD — GET THEM OUT. WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENED!



LET'S GO.



THE VARDA FOUND THE CRASHED FREIGHTER, BUT TOO LATE—

RIGHT, LET
THEM HAVE IT.



THE MAKESHIFT TASKFORCE SCATTERED THE VARDA



THE ODD COLLECTION OF VEHICLES RUMBLED ONTO THE VARDIA CITY.



VARDON WAS FAR FROM PLEASED.

THE ARMY IS
FALLING BACK



THE MACHINES BATTERED THEIR WAY INTO THE CITY.



THE NIBBLER DESCENDED ON THE MACHINE ARMY.



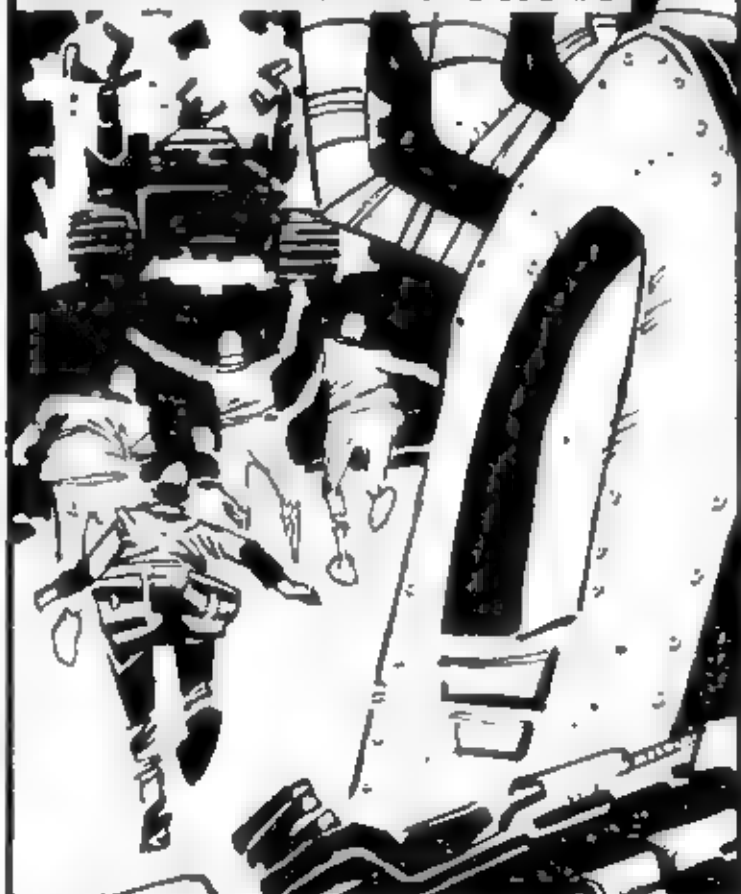
QUICKLY — INSIDE
THIS PLACE.



THE DIGGING MACHINE SEVERED THE MAIN
POWER CABLE . . .



THE RESULTANT LOSS OF POWER ALLOWED
COLLINS AND THE OTHERS TO ESCAPE



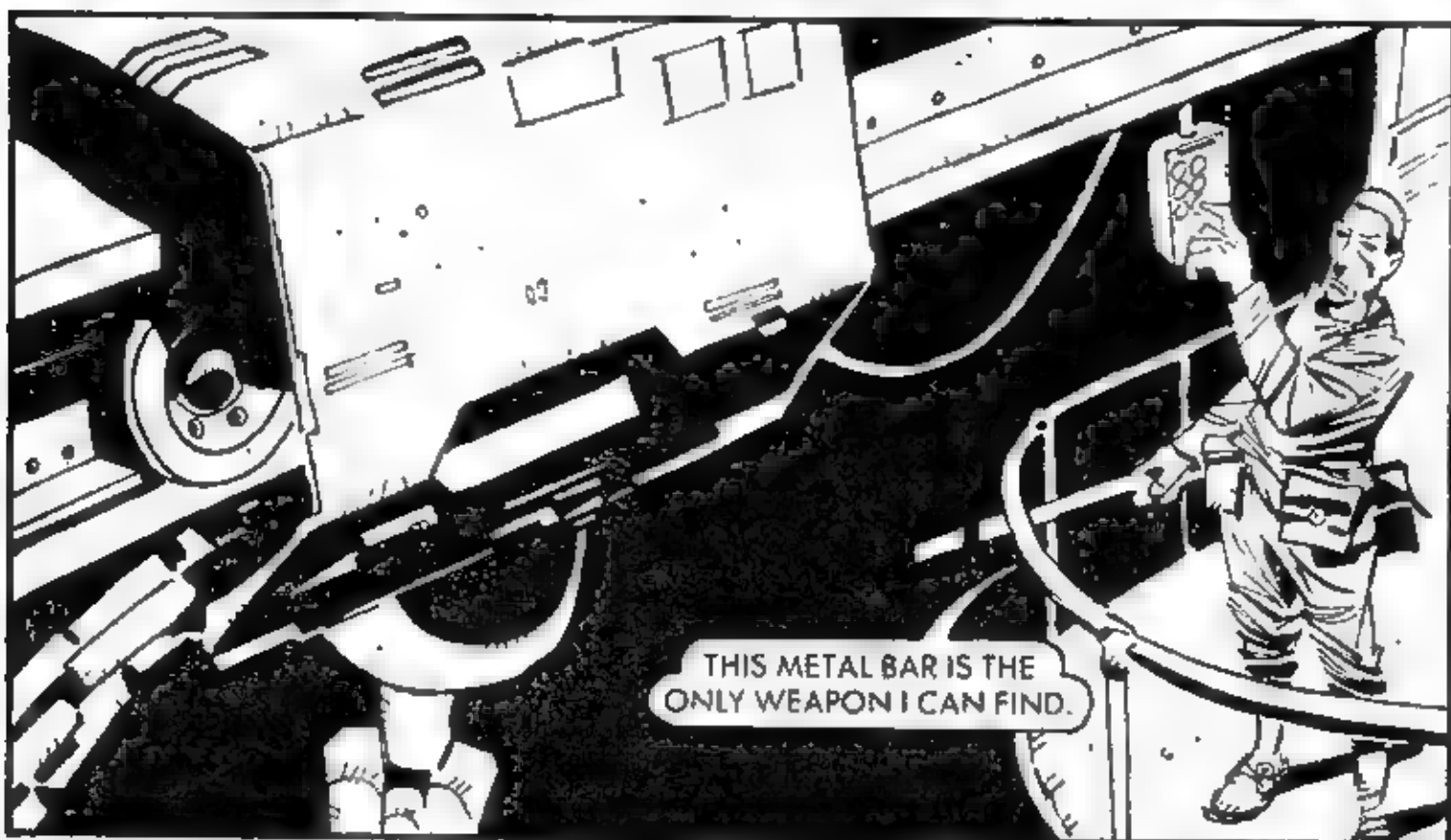
THE NIBBLER'S HERE,
WE'RE PULLING BACK.





THEY REACHED THE GIANT NIBBLER.

YOU MEN GET DOWN WHILE
I CAUSE A BIT OF A DISTURBANCE.

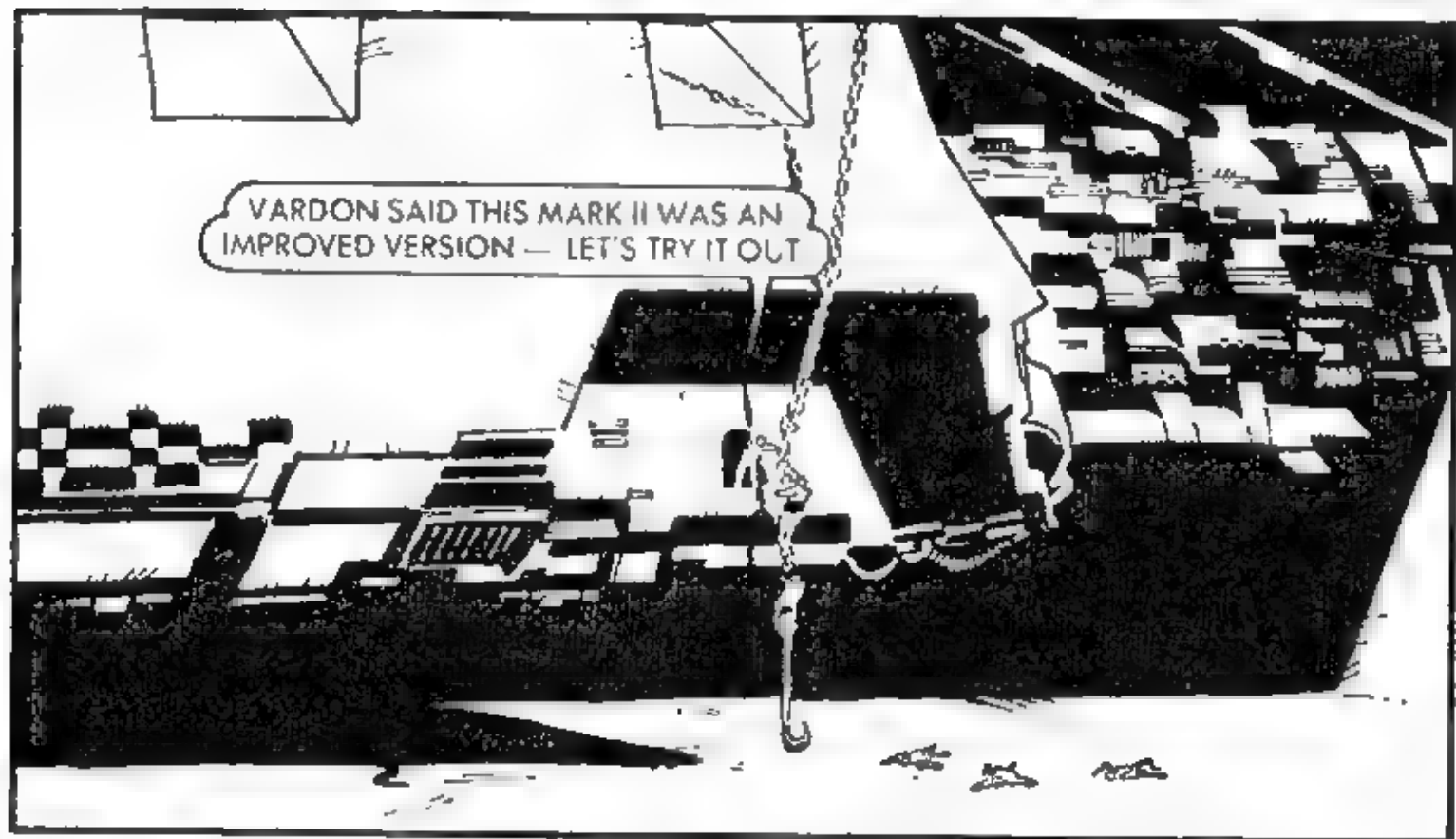


THIS METAL BAR IS THE
ONLY WEAPON I CAN FIND.





VARDON SAID THIS MARK II WAS AN
IMPROVED VERSION — LET'S TRY IT OUT



THE MEN BOARDED THE NIBBLER.

ANTI-GRAV MOTORS — ON! COME ON,
NIBBLER, GET OFF THE GROUND.

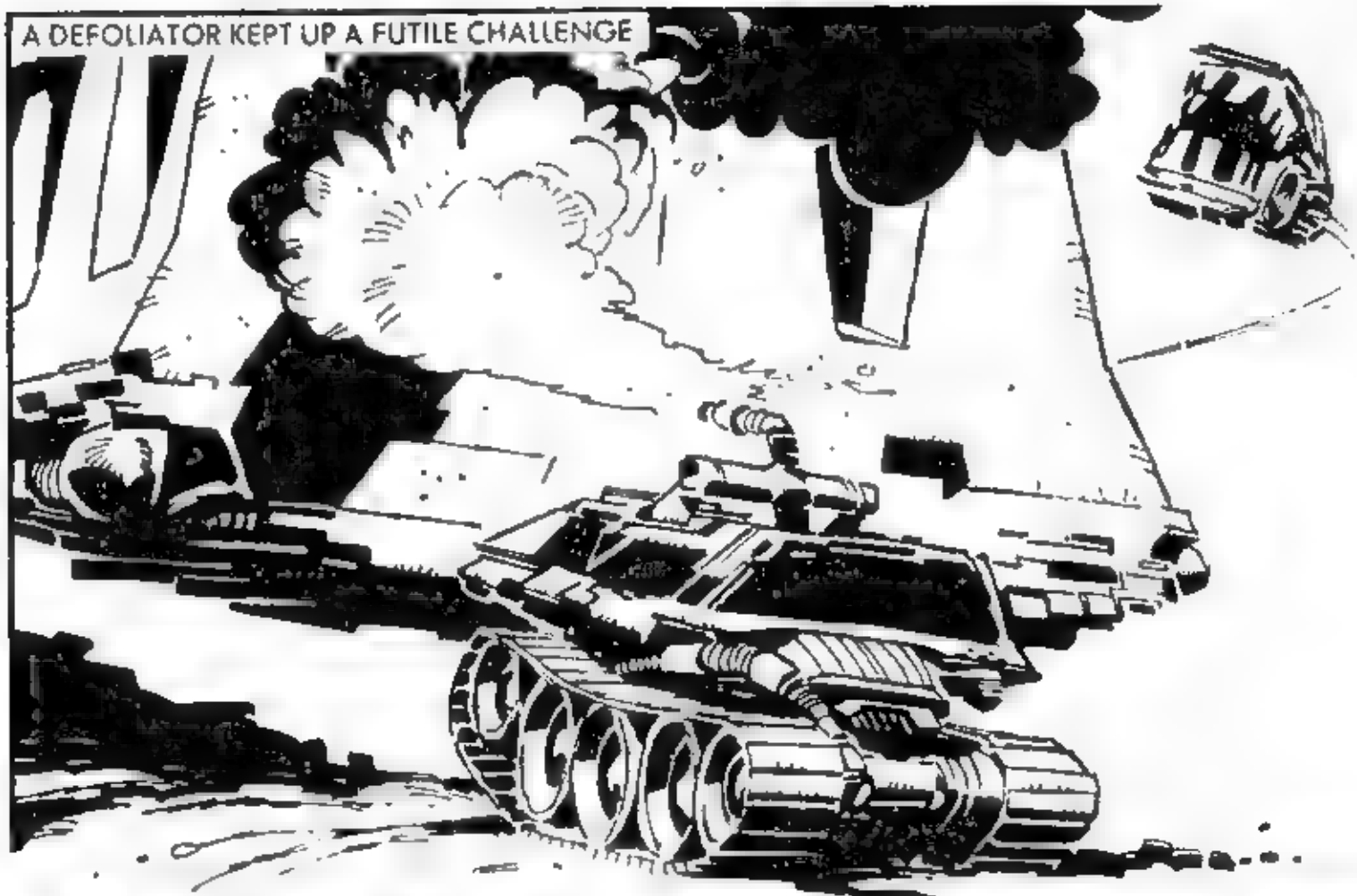


MEANWHILE, THE OTHER NIBBLER DECIMATED THE MAKESHIFT ARMOUR.



THERE'S TWO OF THEM
COMING FOR US NOW!

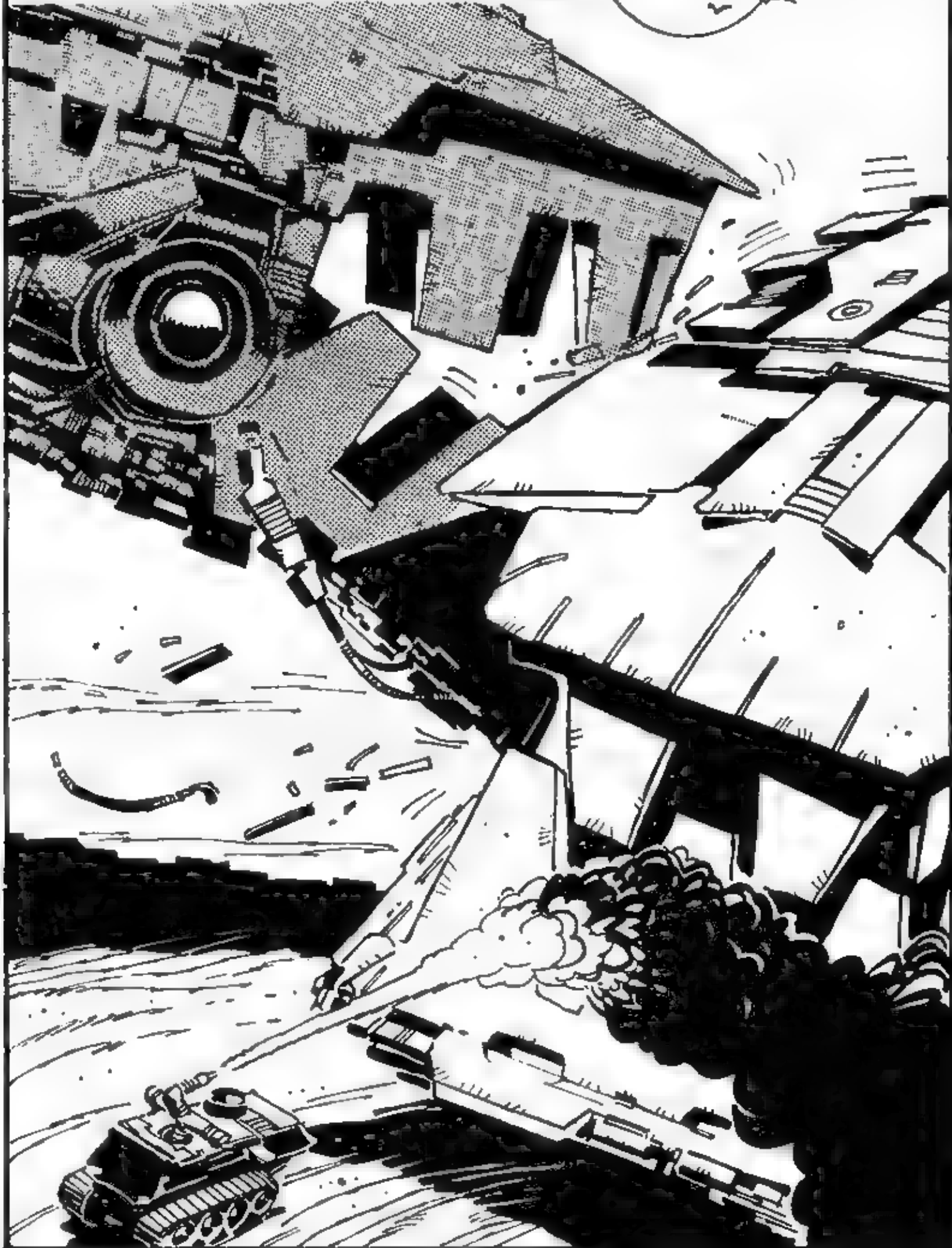
A DEFOLIATOR KEPT UP A FUTILE CHALLENGE



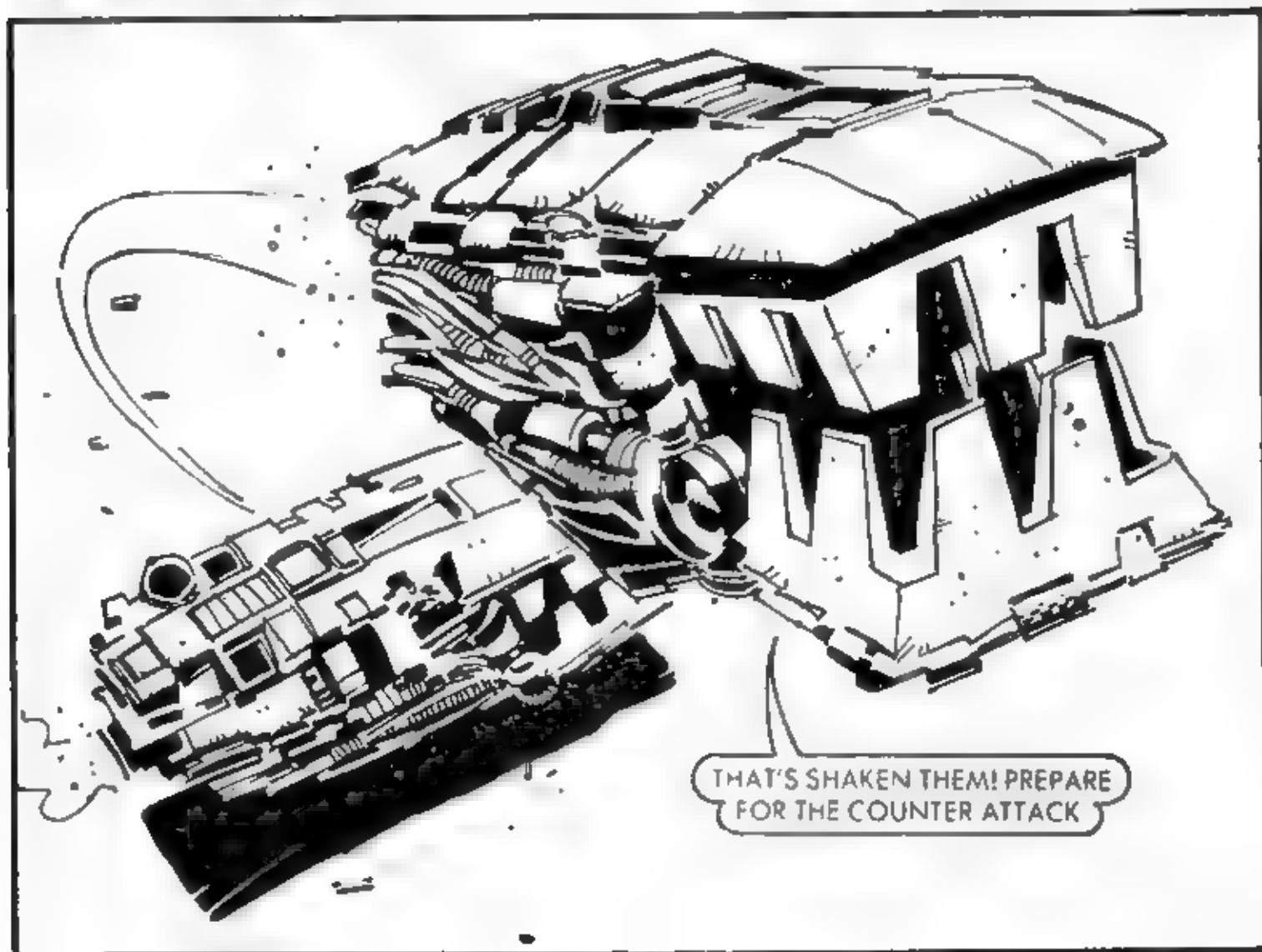
YOUR PUNY FLAME-THROWER IS
OF LITTLE USE TO YOU!



AS THE VARDON CLOSED IN, COLLINS RAMMED THE NIBBLER.



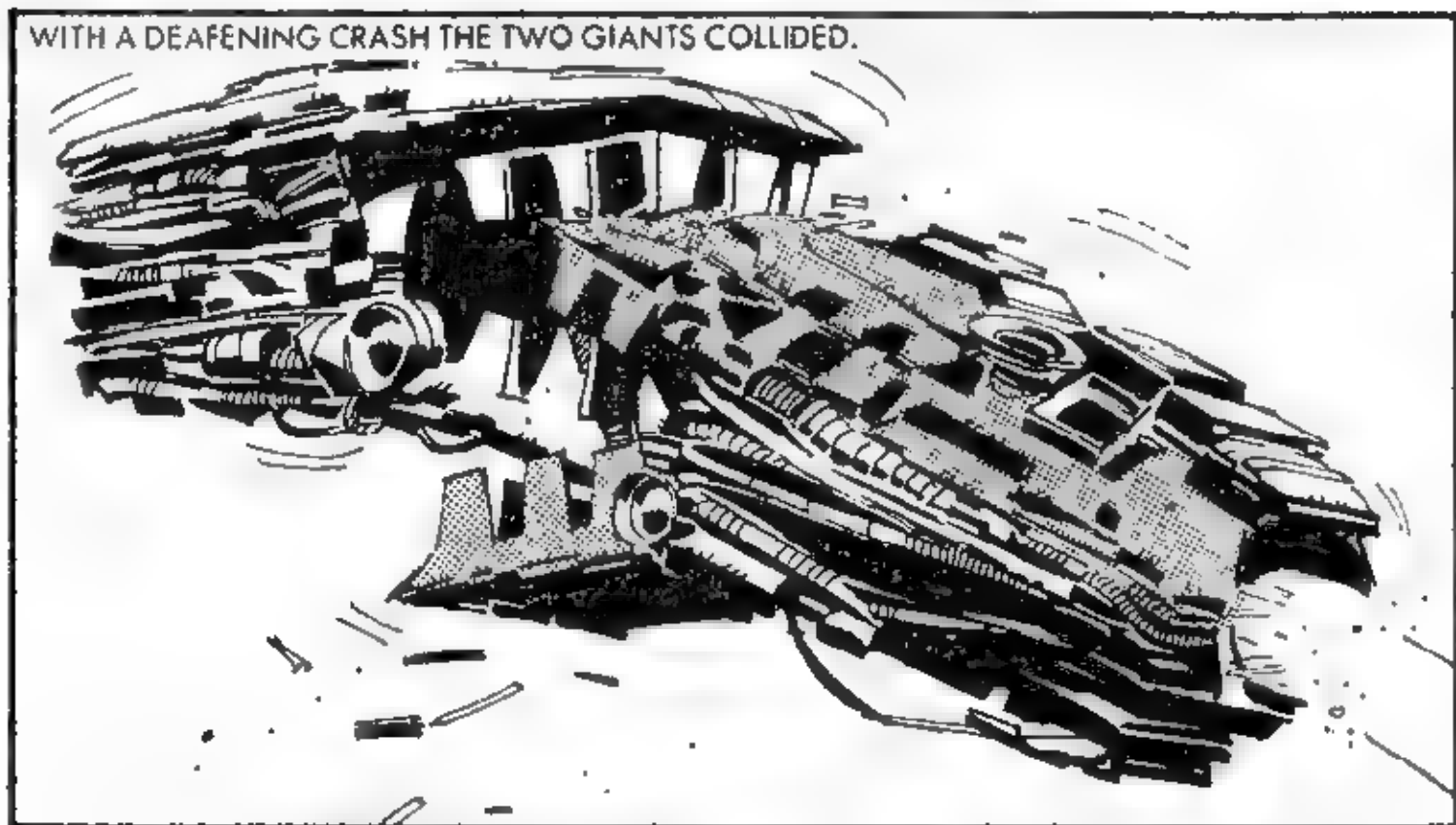
IT IS THE EARTHMAN, COLLINS, IN MY
OTHER MACHINE



THAT'S SHAKEN THEM! PREPARE
FOR THE COUNTER ATTACK



WITH A DEAFENING CRASH THE TWO GIANTS COLLIDED.

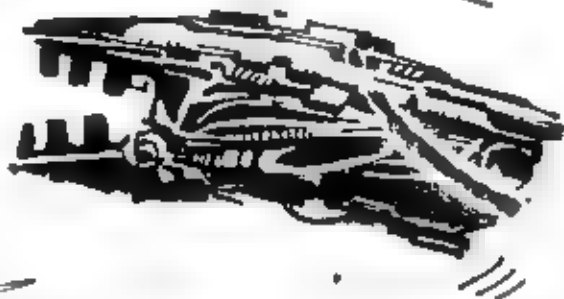




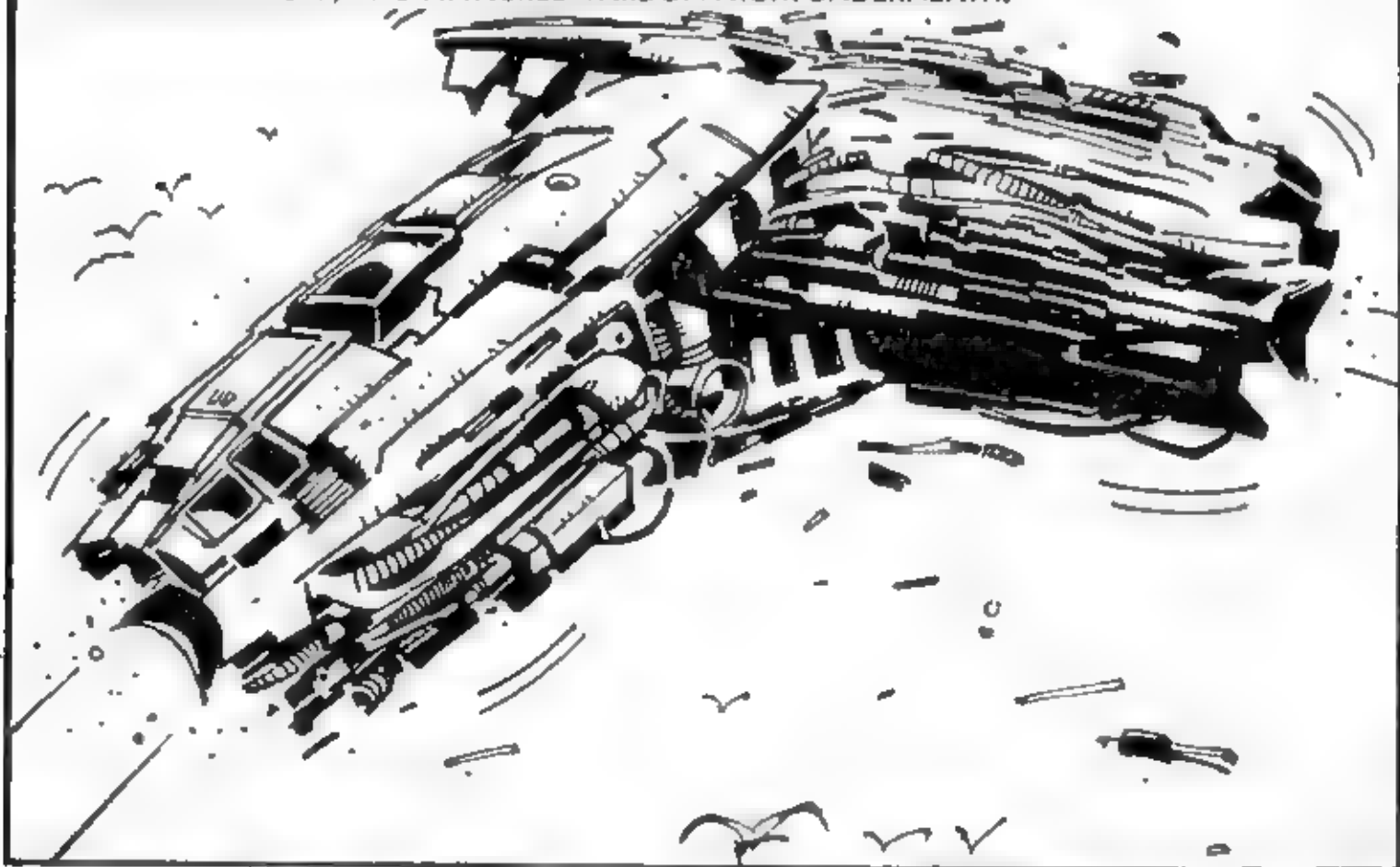
THIS IS NOT GOING TO WORK! BACK
OFF... HALF POWER



WE'VE GOT TO OUT-MANOEUVRE
VARDON AND GET IN CLOSE.



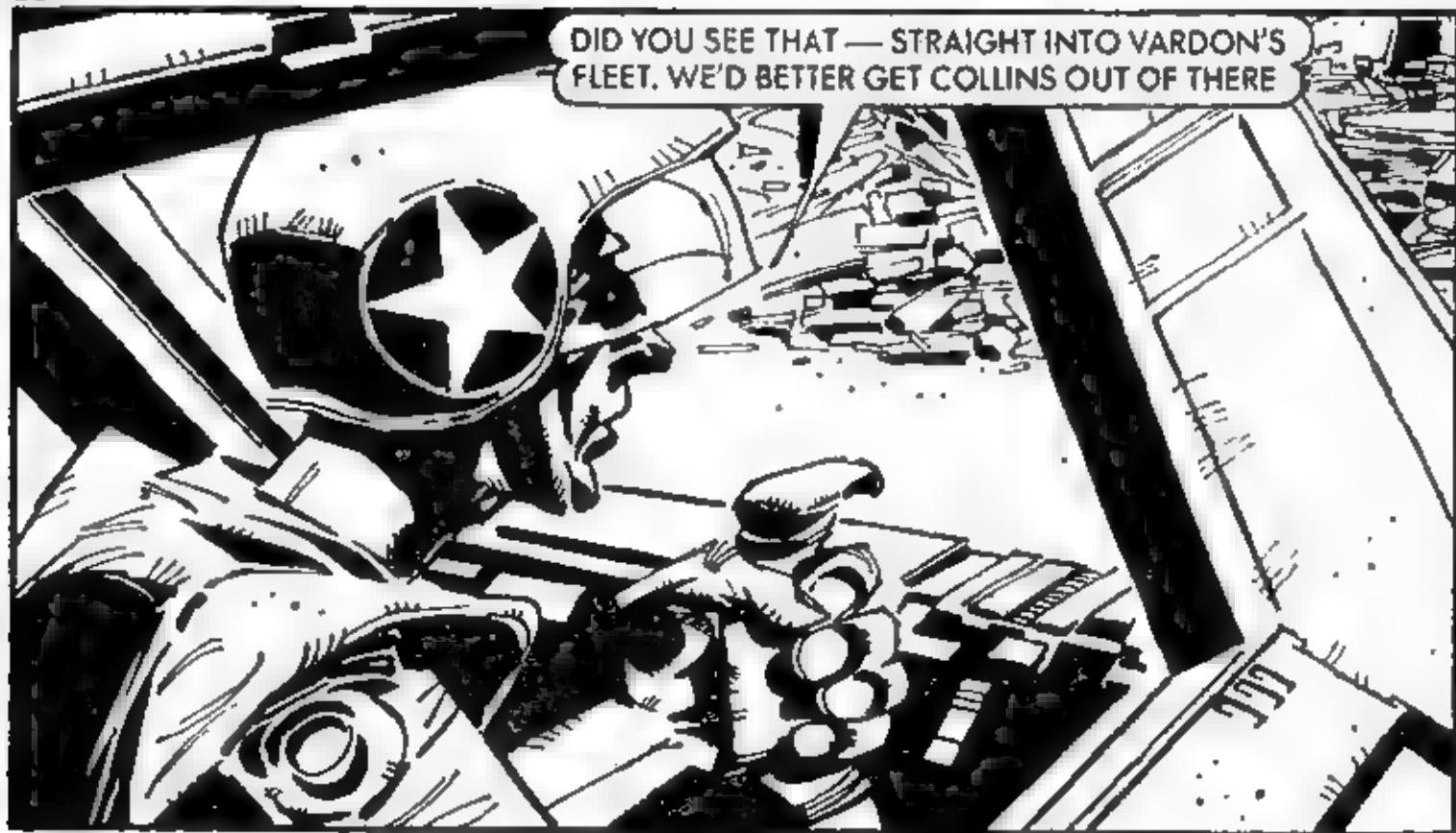
COLLINS BACKED OFF, AND ATTACKED VARDON FROM UNDERNEATH.



FOOL, LET ME TAKE OVER.



DID YOU SEE THAT — STRAIGHT INTO VARDON'S
FLEET. WE'D BETTER GET COLLINS OUT OF THERE



THE EARTH CREWS SWARMED TOWARDS THE VARDA —



ON BOARD A RUINED NIBBLER

WHAT'S THAT SPECIAL ALERT MEAN?



IT'S THE ATOMIC PILE, SIR, FOR MELTING DOWN THE METAL — THE COMPUTER ASSESSES A CRITICAL SITUATION IN TEN MINUTES.



CAN WE STOP IT?



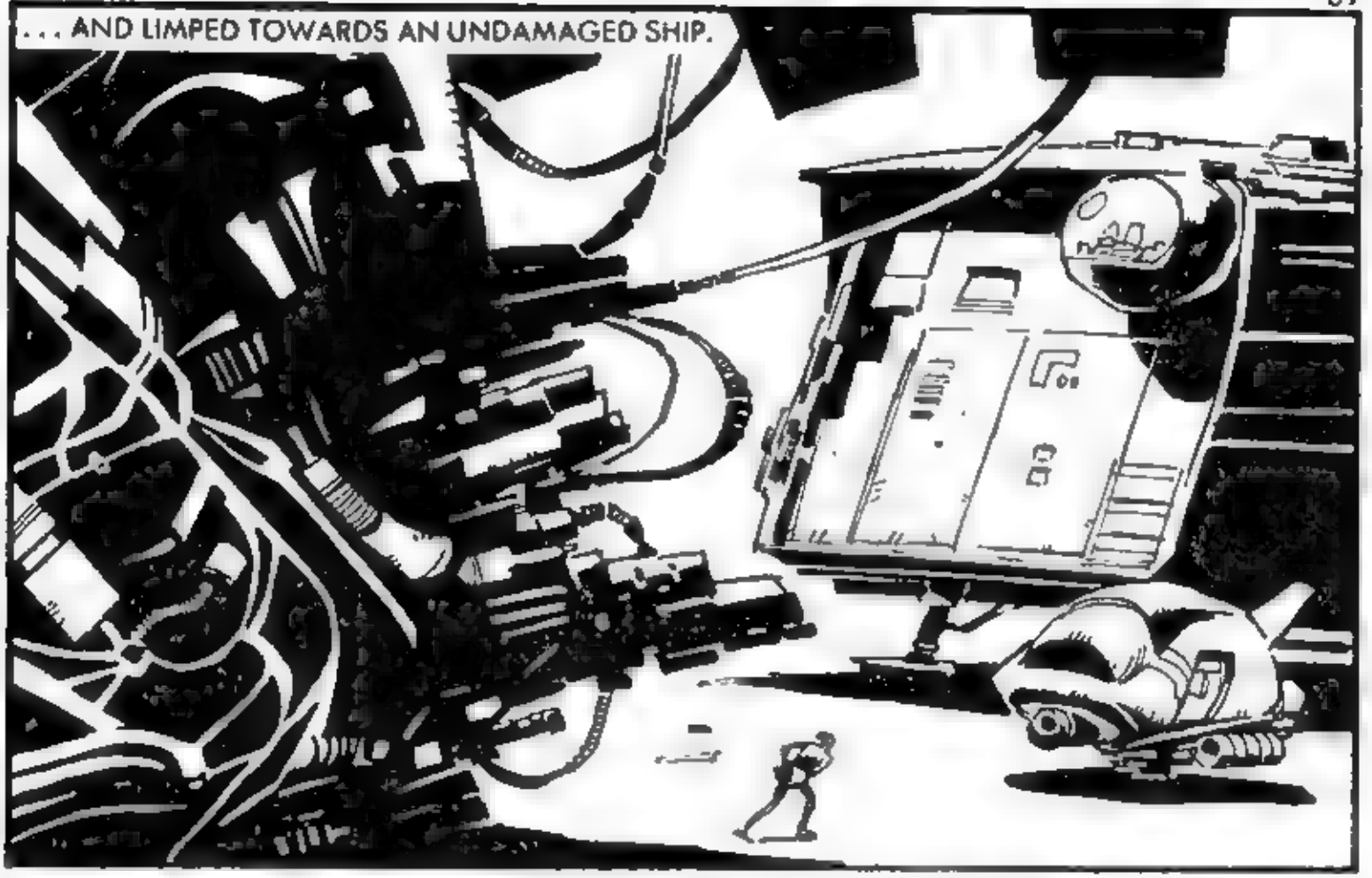
THERE ISN'T TIME — LET'S GET EVERYBODY OUT OF HERE.

VARDON, TOO, HAD ESCAPED DEATH. HE DRAGGED HIMSELF TO THE DOOR...

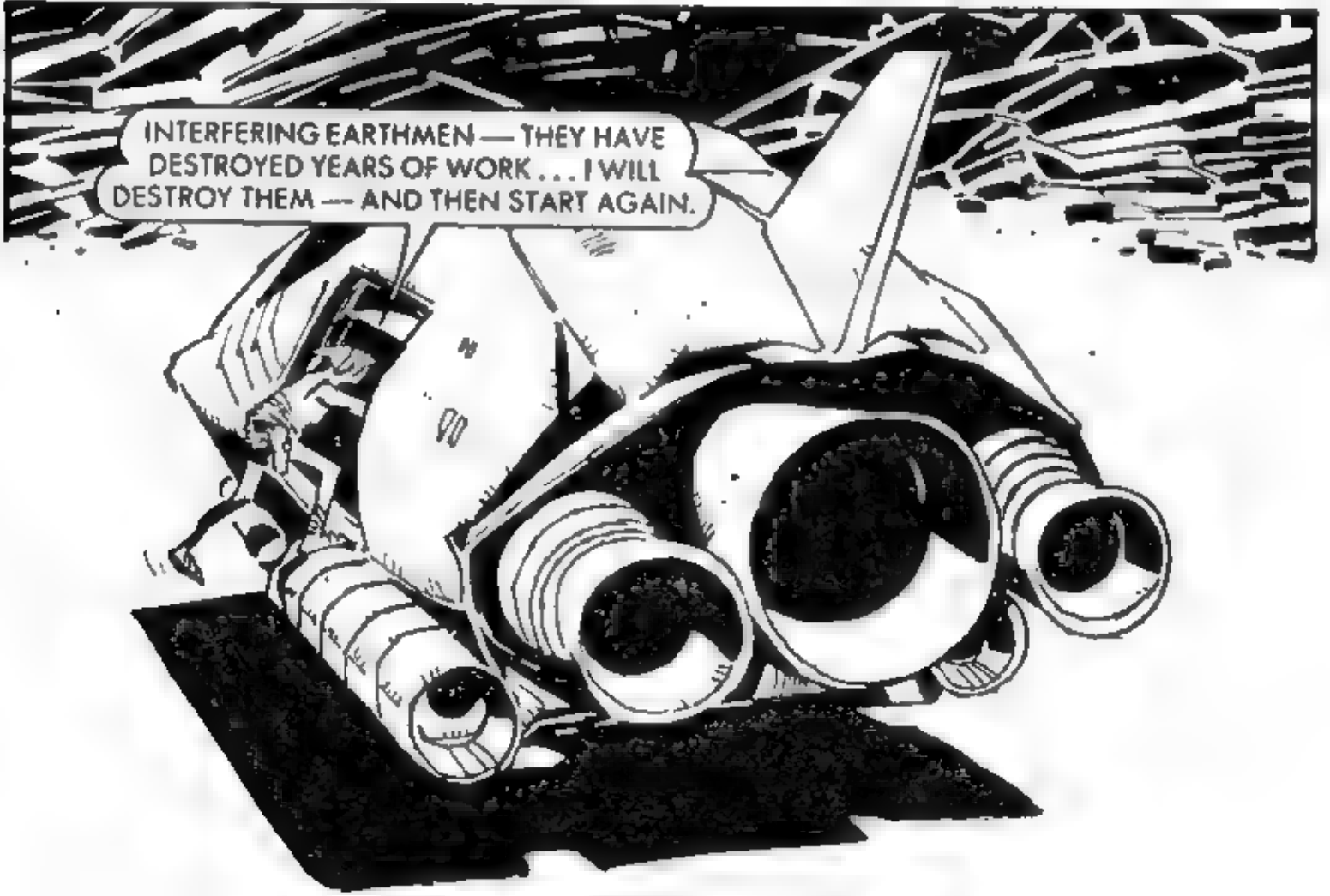


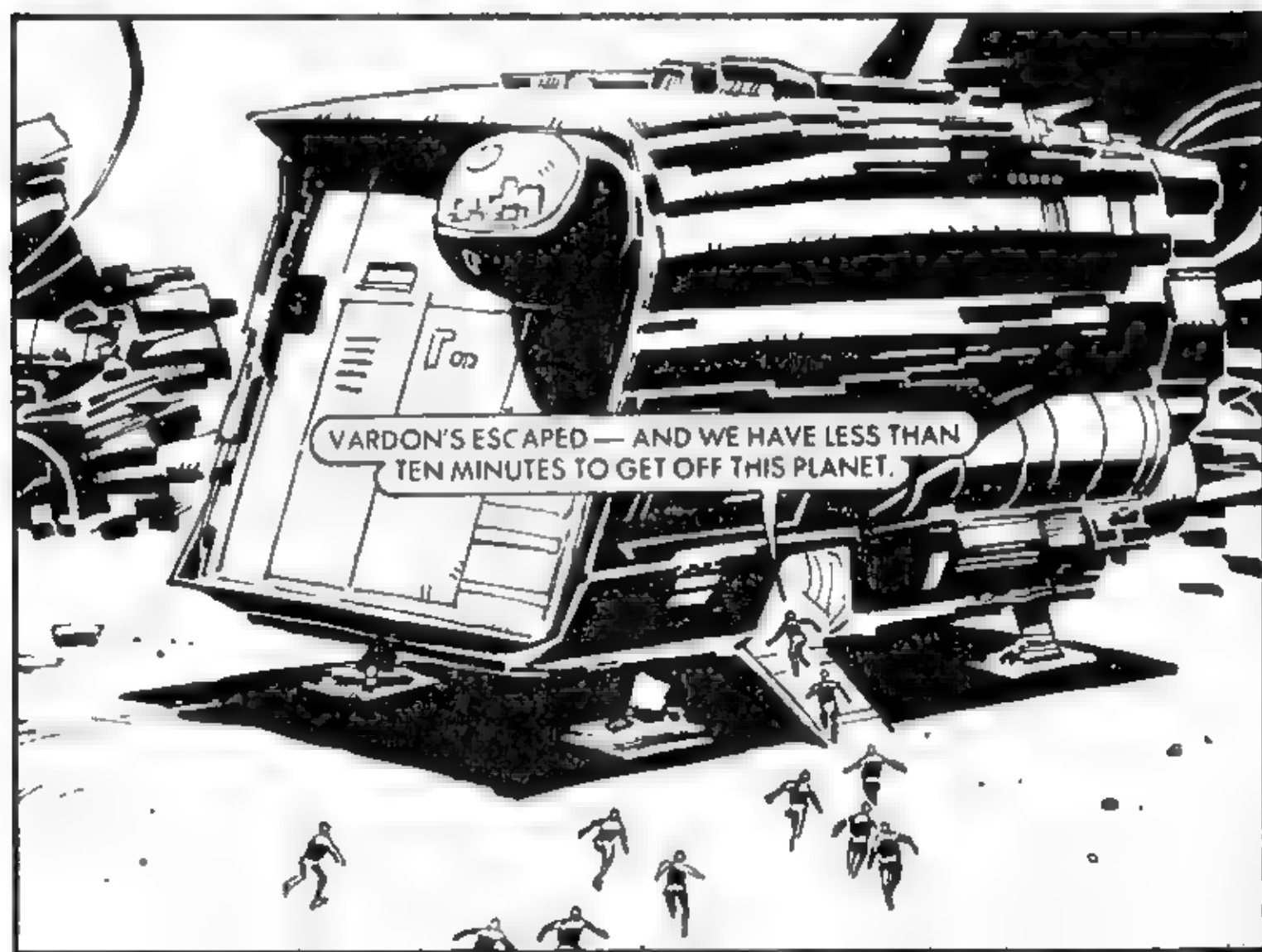
FOOL, HE NEVER WAS ANY GOOD.

... AND LIMPED TOWARDS AN UNDAMAGED SHIP.



INTERFERING EARTHMEN — THEY HAVE DESTROYED YEARS OF WORK... I WILL DESTROY THEM — AND THEN START AGAIN.





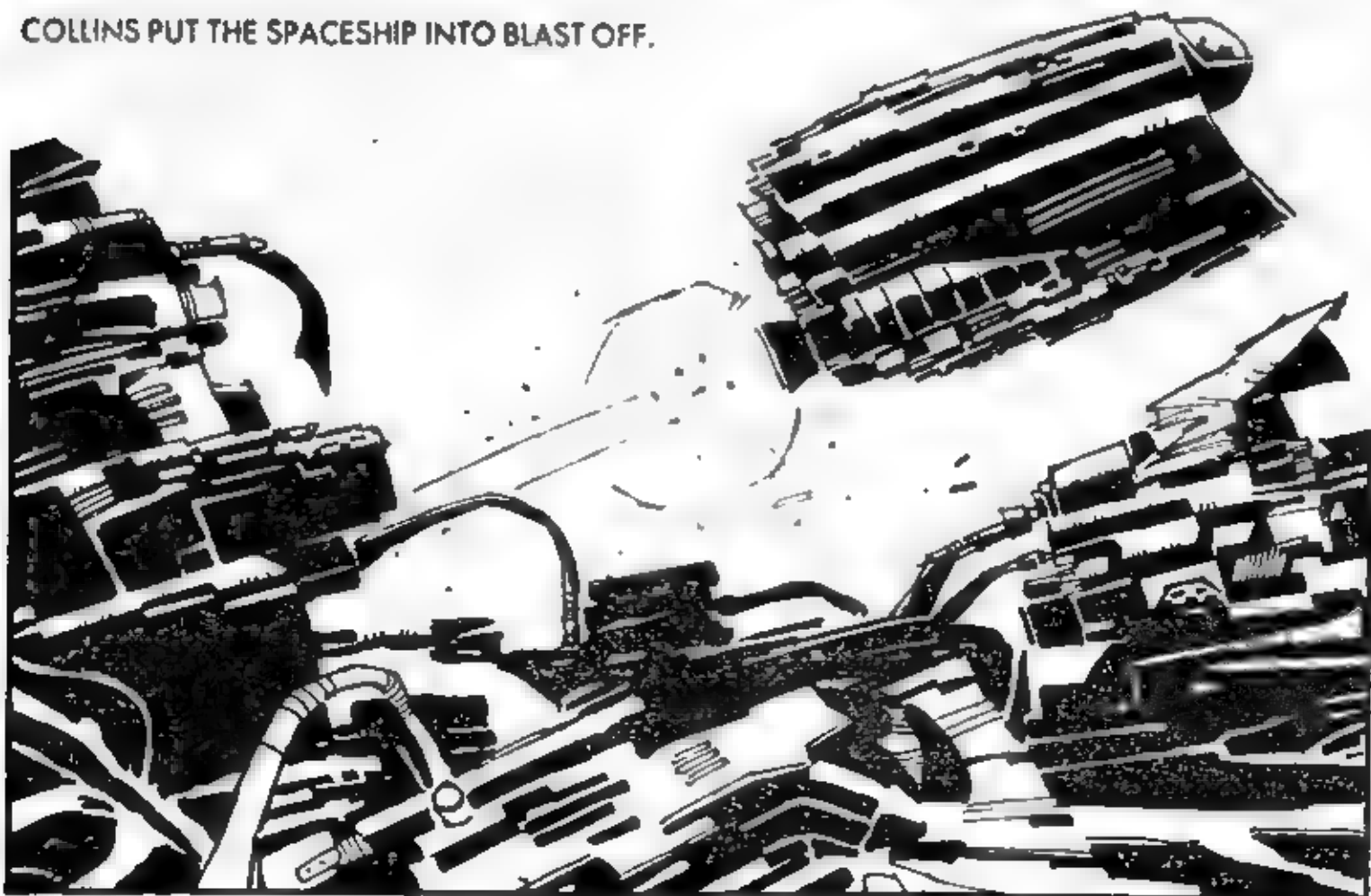
ONCE ALL THE MEN WERE ON BOARD THE SHIP —

STAND BY. LET'S GET
THIS THING OFF THE GROUND.

ALL ENERGISERS ON MAXIMUM.



COLLINS PUT THE SPACESHIP INTO BLAST OFF.





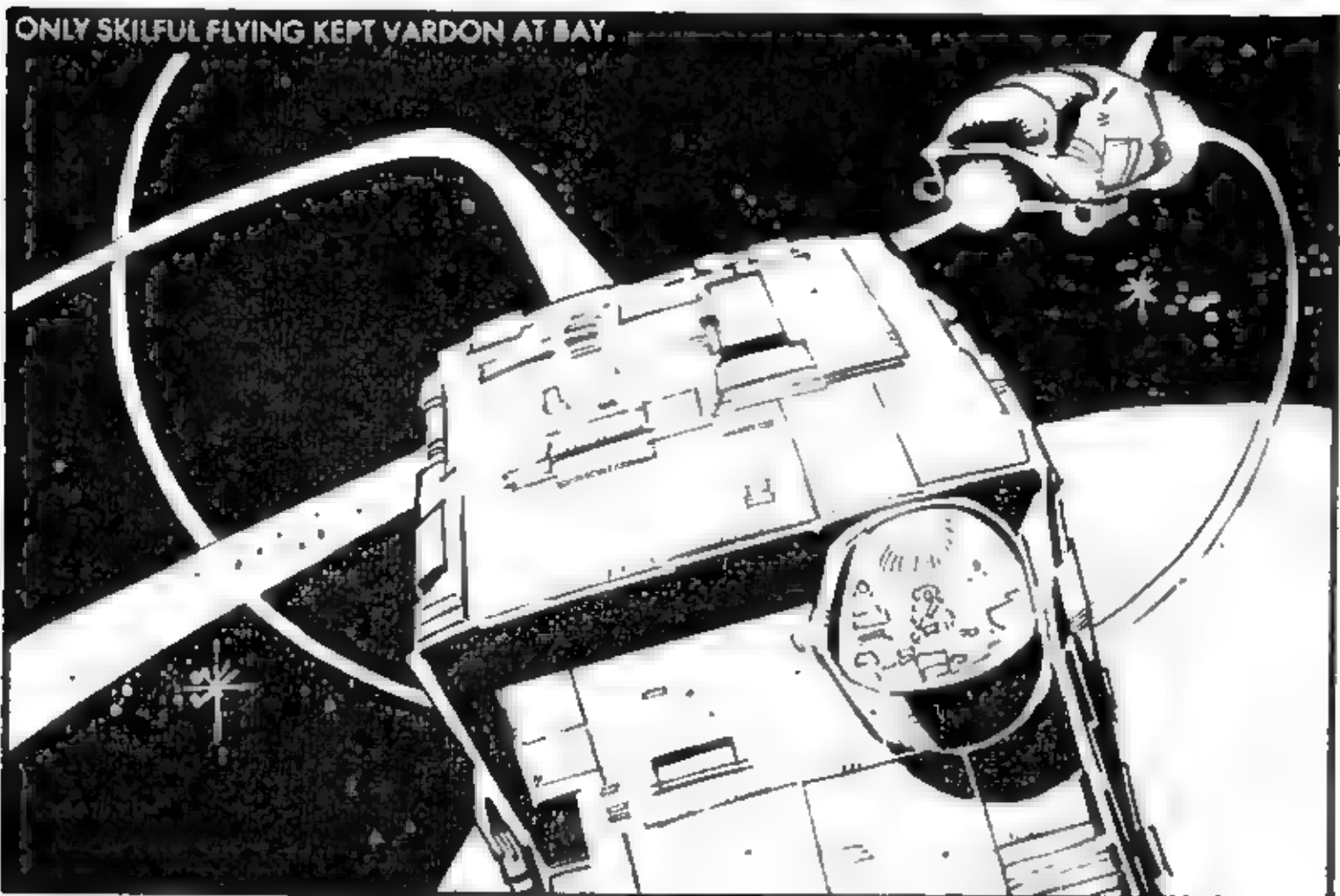
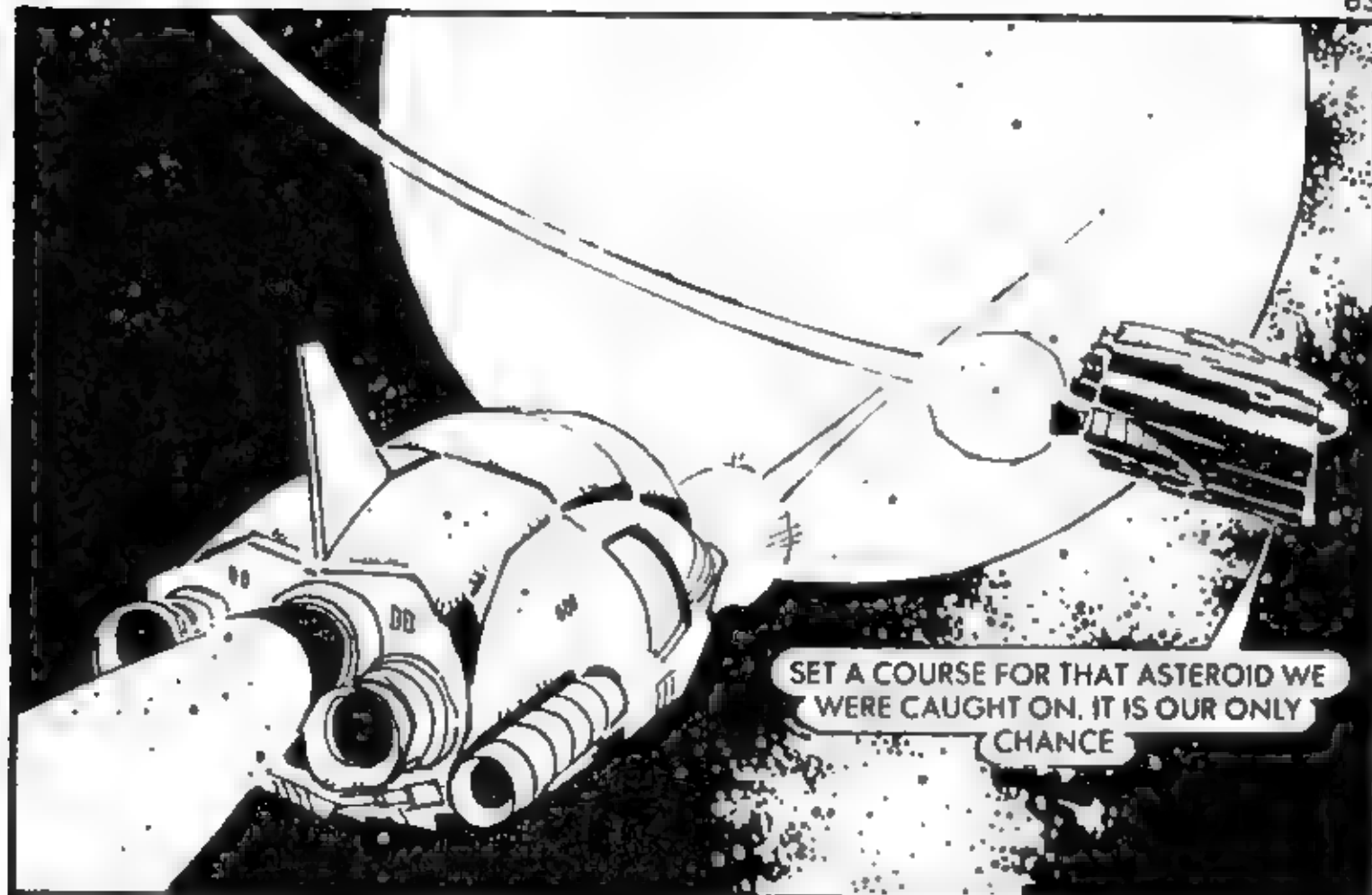
EVEN AS THEY CLEARED THE PLANET A ROARING FIREBALL BATHED THE STERILE GLOBE.

THE FREIGHTER WAS EASY PREY FOR THE WAITING VARDON.



VARDON! THIS SHIP'S UNARMED.
ENGINES — HYPER DRIVE





THE FIREBALL ON ALTERUS CRACKED THE SURFACE, AND THE PLANET WENT CRITICAL.



AND EXPLODED INTO A BILLION PIECES.





COLLINS' TIMING WAS PERFECT. HIS CRAFT WAS FREE OF THE ASTEROID WHEN, DEPRIVED OF ITS POWER SOURCE ON ALTERUS, IT IMPOLODED, SUCKING IN VARDON'S CRAFT.





DON'T FORGET TO READ THIS MONTH'S

OTHER

STARBLAZER

SPACE ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 70



SPACETROOPER ATTACK

ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSAGENT'S

STARBLAZER'S

GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

MARS



MARS, known as the Red Planet has been well-mapped and photographed in recent years. Long held to be the other possible "inhabited" planet in this system, hopes were dashed by Mariner IV's photos which showed the famous "canals" to be natural and not man-made. Phobos and Deimos are its two satellites. This picture was taken by Viking I in 1976.